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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

Labour's culture of perception

Hugo Young on the new lobbyists

G2 with European weather

Women

Sue Johnston: Life after Sheila



G2 page 5

Education

A school day in 2020

G2 pages 12-13

Labour warns civil servants but refuses to suspend No 10 policy adviser

Blair stands by his man

Michael White
Political Editor

DOWNING Street last night read the riot act to senior civil servants and Labour special advisers after revelations that former aides to senior ministers obtained classified government information which was passed on to the commercial clients of lobbying firms.

But Tony Blair refused Tory demands to suspend Roger Liddle, a senior member of his in-house policy unit, who yesterday repeated his emphatic denials of wrong-doing in offering to help a "representative" of US energy firms he met at a champagne party.

Other players in the drama unleashed by Sunday's Observer received less support. Derek Draper, ex-aide to Peter Mandelson, the Minister without Portfolio, was suspended from his lobbying firm, GPC-Market Access, and sacked from the column he wrote for the Express after boasting of his influence and allegedly claiming that Mr Mandelson vetted his writing. He arrived home from an Italian holiday last night.

Another lobbying firm, GJW Government Relations, admitted that Kari Milner, an account executive who joined from Gordon Brown's office after the election, had leaked the conclusions of a Commons energy select committee to the American consultant, who was secretly working for the Observer.

The firm's chairman, Wilf Weeks, apologised to Martin O'Neill, Labour chairman of the trade and industry select committee, and promised an internal inquiry to see if "some form of disciplinary action should take place".

Number 10, which regarded Mr Draper as an exuberant accident waiting to happen, insisted that the issue was primarily one about the conduct of lobbyists, not government.

But the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Richard Wilson, let it be known he would be reminding senior officials, especially the politically appointed special advisers who followed Labour into office, of the confidential terms of their contracts.

Downing Street is standing by Mr Liddle, saying that he merely indulged in small talk at a party. "Roger is a man of complete integrity but excessive goodwill," said one minister.

Official efforts to deflect public concern led to a row over the context of Mr Liddle's remarks and those by Ben Lucas, a director of LLM, the new lobbying firm run by three New Labour high-flyers.

Mr Lucas, the ex-adviser to Jack Straw who reportedly wrote his famous "squeegee merchants" speech, denied he ever had a copy of Mr Brown's Mansion House speech, details of which were fed to an LLM client. "Absolutely not, absolutely not," he said.

The Chancellor himself issued a detailed rebuttal of the charge, stressing that he had only finalised the speech shortly before it was issued on June 11. Mr Lucas had claimed to the undercover Observer man that he had several days' notice of the contents of the speech through speaking to those working on it. No specific mention was made in the speech of his intention to announce planned growth in public spending of 2.75 per cent, said Mr Brown. That was another of Mr Draper's boasts, according to the Observer. He had given the figure to a client, the US investment bankers, Salomon Smith Barney.

Last night the shadow chancellor, Francis Maude, said Mr Draper was either guilty of using market sensitive Treasury information for his own financial gain or lying. The 2.75 per cent figure had been in Treasury documents accompanying Mr Brown's June 11 statement, said Mr Maude. He challenged Mr Brown to make sure his own "coterie of immediate advisers" had not leaked it to their "cronies".

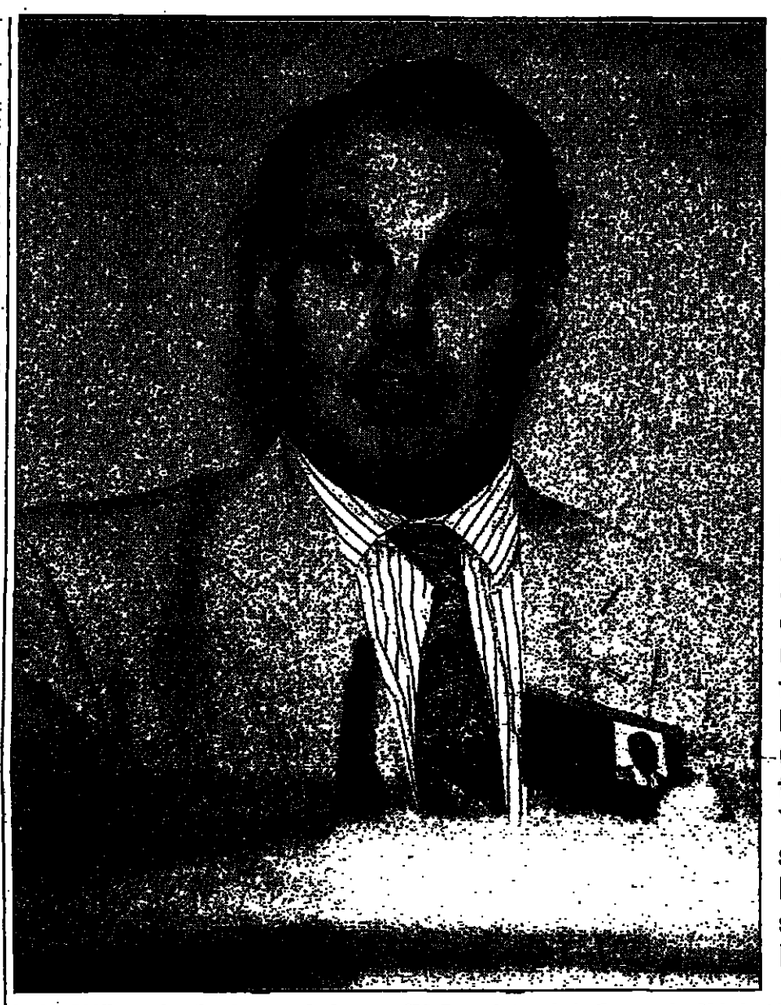
Mr Blair's official spokesman challenged the Observer to back its claims by publishing the tape-recording it had of key conversations. Last night the paper stood by its investigation and promised co-operation with any inquiry launched by the Leader of the Commons, Ann Taylor. It said it would be publishing more next week.

In a statement, the paper said: "The Observer is pleased that Ann Taylor has acknowledged the seriousness of the issues raised in the story 'New Labour insiders offer secrets for cash'. Libel considerations do not allow us to publish in full the transcripts of conversations held between Observer journalists and the individuals central to our report."

Mr Maude said: "Roger Liddle has not denied any of the quotes attributed to him. Until he denies categorically all the evidence presented by that newspaper then his honesty and integrity can continue to remain in question."

The Speaker of the Commons, Betty Boothroyd, rejected Tory and Lib Dem calls for an emergency statement, though points of order were raised by angry Conservatives, still smarting from the sleaze record which tainted the Major government.

From Chorley to charmed circle, page 3
Hugo Young, page 10
Leader comment, page 11



'Just tell me what you want and who you want to meet and Derek [Draper] and I will make the call for you,' **Roger Liddle** (left) told the Observer. Yesterday he was still at work at the Downing Street policy unit

'There are 17 people who count and to say I am intimate with every one of them is the understatement of the century,' **Derek Draper** (right) told the Observer. Yesterday he was suspended by his lobbying firm and sacked as an Express columnist



Britain really is cool, poll shows

Alan Travis
Home Affairs Editor

A CLEAR majority of the public endorses the Government's claim that we are living in Cool Britannia, but one in three wants to leave the country for good.

The July Guardian/ICM opinion poll on Britain's image of itself shows the feel-good factor reaching a new peak, with the overwhelming majority agreeing with Tony Blair *that Britain is* a good place to live (90 per cent); a good place to bring up children (81 per cent); and a good place to grow old (63 per cent).

The country is split over whether Britain is still a "snobbish" society but clearly believes tolerance to be a key national characteristic. The poll reveals a picture of a country that appears fairly at ease with itself and whose endorsement of the Labour government appears, at least this month, to be growing in strength, despite the signs of a coming economic recession.

These findings are in sharp contrast with recent commentators who have suggested that for the vast majority life in Tony Blair's "model 21st-century nation" is actually old or uncool. Nevertheless, some two thirds of the country do see Britain as a class-ridden society and one in three of the population would emigrate if they were free and had the choice to settle anywhere in the world; 53 per cent of people said they would stay in Britain. Only in the traditionally more adventurous 18-to-24 age group is there a majority who would like to emigrate.

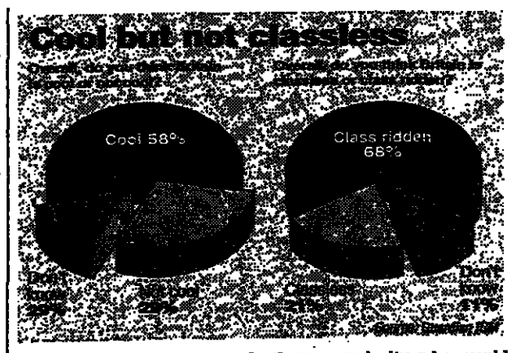
The startling finding that one in three wants to leave Tony Blair's Britain, however, has to be put in context. When a Gallup opinion poll in February 1993 asked a similar question it showed that nearly half the country (49 per cent) wanted to leave John Major's Britain.

The most likely destination is mainland Europe (22 per cent), particularly Spain and France. Outside Europe the most likely destinations are Australia (18 per cent); USA (16 per cent); Canada (10 per cent); New Zealand (8 per cent); the Caribbean (4 per cent); Africa (2 per cent); and others (7 per cent).

People's views of Britain's standing in the world are mixed, apparently governed by their political outlook. Some 29 per cent believe Britain is "a major player in the world" — the most popular option among Conservative supporters.

About 34 per cent see Britain as a major player, but only at a European level and this was the strongest view among Labour supporters. A further 17 per cent see Britain only as a minor player in Europe, and some 15 per cent believe the country has very little influence anywhere and this was the most popular view among Liberal Democrat supporters.

□ ICM interviewed a random sample of 1,200 adults aged over 18 by telephone between July 3 and 4. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults.



Single currency faces meltdown

Stephen Bates in Brussels

THE euro struck the latest in a string of disasters yesterday when the French government announced it was melting down millions of the new coins because the edges of different denominations are so similar that blind people cannot tell them apart.

With less than six months to go before the launch of the new currency, the decision to trash the 10 and 50 cent coins already produced follows a warning from the European Blind Union that they would prove a catastrophe for their members.

In Brussels yesterday it was also being suggested that vending machines might have trouble telling the coins apart.

It is not the first glitch. In May the cast of the anti-forgery hologram to be inserted into the euro bank notes went missing on an Air France flight between Paris and Germany. And last week a strike by production workers in the French mint — over money, naturally — held up both the meltdown and the production of the latest coins.

Yves-Thibault de Silguy, the European Commissioner responsible for the single currency, shrugged off the latest cash-flow crisis, saying: "We don't want to create a problem for tens of millions of people just because of a small number of coins, which can be melted down."

The move creates extra problems for the French, whose mint has been churning the coins out at the rate of a million a day. It is thought that at least 9 million 10 cent coins have been produced and an unknown number of 50 cents.

There are eight coins in all, ranging in size from the equivalent of a 5p piece to the size of a 2p coin.

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In *The* Guardian tomorrow: Eric Cantona, movie star, reveals all

+ Francis Wheen, Britain's most irreverent columnist + Society pages + European weather forecast

Sketch

Harriet's hotline for coughing up



Simon Hoggart

HARRIET Harman yesterday announced the new, simpler way of assessing child support, after the numerous disasters ushered in by the CSA.

Apparently it'll be easy. As soon as the mother applies, the father will be contacted. "In most cases an assessment can be made over the phone. He can start paying right away," she said.

She sounded like one of those smiley young women who appear in the ads for phone services, such as insurance. Distraught, sopping chap with wrench calls up. "We're flooded out!" he cries. "Don't worry," says smiley young woman. "We'll post you a cheque for a million pounds, today!"

Ms Harman began with a generous, and atypical, gesture towards the other side. "I seek to make no party political criticism of the previous government. We are all wiser with the benefit of hindsight," she said gravely.

I thought this could be because she was probably making her last important statement as Social Security Secretary, before what will be described as a "sideways" move to the Department of Paper Clips and Copiers.

But I suspect the real reason is that, back in 1992, the Labour Party willingly joined the mad rush to create the CSA. Blaming one party for the Act is as pointless as blaming a single football hooligan for the riot.

The gist of Ms Harman's plan is that every father pays a fixed proportion of his net income for each child, with no ifs and no buts. However, in case any ifs and buts turned up, there would be a tribunal to sort things out. One suspected that this body would be kept rather busy.

Iain Duncan Smith stood up and made a better response than usual. He warned that things might look simple, but by the time the tribunal got to work on individual cases, the whole business could be quickly jammed up. What about pensions, what about long-term illness, what about debts from before the separation? His list went on and on.

And, he might have added, what about blokes who ask for payment in twenties, so as to avoid income tax and VAT as well as child support?

Ms Harman replied at length, becoming more and more agitated. She started wringing her hands, and talking directly to the Speaker who, so far as I know, has no children and is thus able to afford holidays para-gliding off sunny beaches.

Douglas Hogg said the CSA should no longer do the job. "Return the whole process to the courts, or else to a quasi-judicial body," he suggested.

Some MPs could hardly believe their ears. Why was Mr Hogg making this grotesque suggestion? Was it merely because, as a lawyer, he wanted more jobs for lawyers? Or, bizarrely, perhaps he believes that lawyers make it easier to obtain justice — a view as discredited as the belief that Ordeal by Water is a reliable test for heresy.

Ms Harman slapped him down. The courts had produced wildly different judgments in similar cases. "The courts did not work!"

All day the Tories had been trying to raise the topic of the influence-peddlers at Number 10 and the scum which has risen up the murky dishwater of New Labour. But it was Dennis Skinner who got it in. He praised Ms Harman: "If she gets it right, she could get the highest accolade — she could end up in Draper's list of 17 useful people."

But then perhaps the party is beginning to learn its lessons. Just before Ms Harman's statement, Linda Perham (Ilford N) asked about the effect of mortgage rises on the poor. She got a routine (i.e. unhelpful) reply from the minister, John Denham.

"I welcome that . . ." she said, then suddenly switched gear. "Well, actually, I don't welcome that answer at all, I'm just used to saying that kind of thing," and continued with a critical supplementary.

It's good to see the toad rebel against the harrow.

CSA reform 'hits low-paid'

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

MINISTERS face a backlash over plans published yesterday to reform child maintenance, after it emerged that one in four mothers affected could be worse off while many poorer fathers would have to pay more.

The proposed changes are being defended by the Government on the slogan that it is better to get more fathers to pay, rather than to get fathers to pay more. But almost a third of fathers would have higher maintenance bills.

Although men with a net income of less than £200 a week would not face the full levy under the simpler formula, the Department of Social Security admits that the 30 per cent of fathers likely to pay more would typically have incomes on or below average.

Worryingly for the Government, fathers' groups last night criticised the plans, and lone-parent organisations seemed lukewarm.

Bruce Sawford, for the National Association for Child Support Action, said: "They have come up with a cheaper system, but the fundamental problems remain."

Ministers are anxious to ensure broad support, following the fiasco of the system introduced in 1993, which created the Child Support Agency and the current, highly-complex formula for calculating maintenance payments.

Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, told the Commons that the changes — set out in a consultative green paper — would replace this "Byzantine" formula with a simple scale based on percentages of net income.

"It relies only on identifying the number of children the father has, where the children live and how much income he has after deduction of tax and national insurance," she said.

Although the Government has ruled out returning to a courts-based system, it is proposing a right of appeal to a tribunal in cases where an "absent" parent incurs special expenses in visiting a child or giving other support.

The tribunal would be able to vary payment rates where a father already provided some help, such as meeting a first family's housing costs. But the father's own housing and other costs would no longer be taken into account.

The other main change proposed would be the introduction of a maintenance payment of up to £10 a week for women and children living on income support — if the father met his obligation.

At present, the Treasury keeps all money paid in such cases. The absence of any incentive has been seen as a prime reason for lack of co-operation among the million lone parents on income support. However, the on-payment would be £5-£10 a week where the father had weekly income below £200.

Liz Sewell, chief executive of the lone parents' pressure group Gingerbread, said the cash incentive "will ensure they are more willing to claim maintenance", but should be higher for two or more children.

The average assessment under the plans — designed to be cost-neutral to taxpayers — is expected to be £29 a week, compared to £38 at present, but compliance is forecast at 80 per cent or more rather than the current 66 per cent.

The changes require legislation and would not take effect for three years. In order to avert a collapse of the CSA in the interim, the green paper, Children First, also proposes to strengthen the agency. Ms Harman yesterday announced £12 million immediate extra funding.

Opposition MPs fear the changes may merely shift problems from the CSA assessment to the proposed tribunal system.

Ian Duncan Smith, shadow Conservative social security secretary, questioned how the huge backlog of existing CSA cases would be tackled now that there was a potential incentive to await the reforms.

Dafydd Wigley, president of Plaid Cymru, warned: "There is a danger of going from a system that's too complicated to one that's too simplistic."

Children First: A New Approach to Child Support: Stationery Office: £9.50

Main points

- Simple formula based on 15 per cent of net income for one child, 20 per cent for two and 25 per cent for three or more (where weekly net income above £200).
- Minimum £5 a week to be paid where net income below £100; sliding scale where income £100-£199.
- Only variation to be where children in second family: assessable net income to be reduced by same percentages.
- Right of appeal to tribunal with power to vary payments.
- 75 per cent of mothers to be better off; 70 per cent of fathers to pay less.
- Changes to take effect in 2001. All cases to be re-assessed, with phasing of payment changes.

'Mason link' to foiled art theft

John Hooper in Rome

ITALY'S deputy prime minister hinted last night that the daring theft of three of the world's most famous and valuable paintings, which were recovered in dawn raids yesterday, might have had a political motive.

Police said they had no idea why the paintings, by Van Gogh and Cézanne, were seized six weeks ago from the Italian National Museum of Modern Art in Rome, but Walter Veltroni, who is also minister for the arts, suggested possible links with the P2 Masonic Lodge and the Armed Falange.

Nicola D'Angelo, the police officer who led yesterday's raids in the capital, said the theft was not ordered by a collector. He said the hold-up on May 19 was the work of "a gang with interests abroad, specialising in robberies, but not specifically art thefts".

The works were found after co-ordinated raids in Rome and Turin. Van Gogh's The Gardener was found under a bed, wrapped in a plastic rubbish bag. Cézanne's unfinished masterpiece, Le Cabanon de Jourdan, and Van Gogh's L'Arlésienne were also recovered.

Eight Italians were arrested. One of two women detained was said by police to be a museum employee.

Mr Veltroni told a press conference the robbery had opened a "bleeding wound, and one Italy did not deserve".

He said the robbery coincided with a vandal attack on other art at the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. It coincided with a brief, "anomalous" period that had seen the disappearance from house arrest of Licio Gelli, head of the politically influential P2 Masonic lodge, and a rash of threats from the Armed Falange.

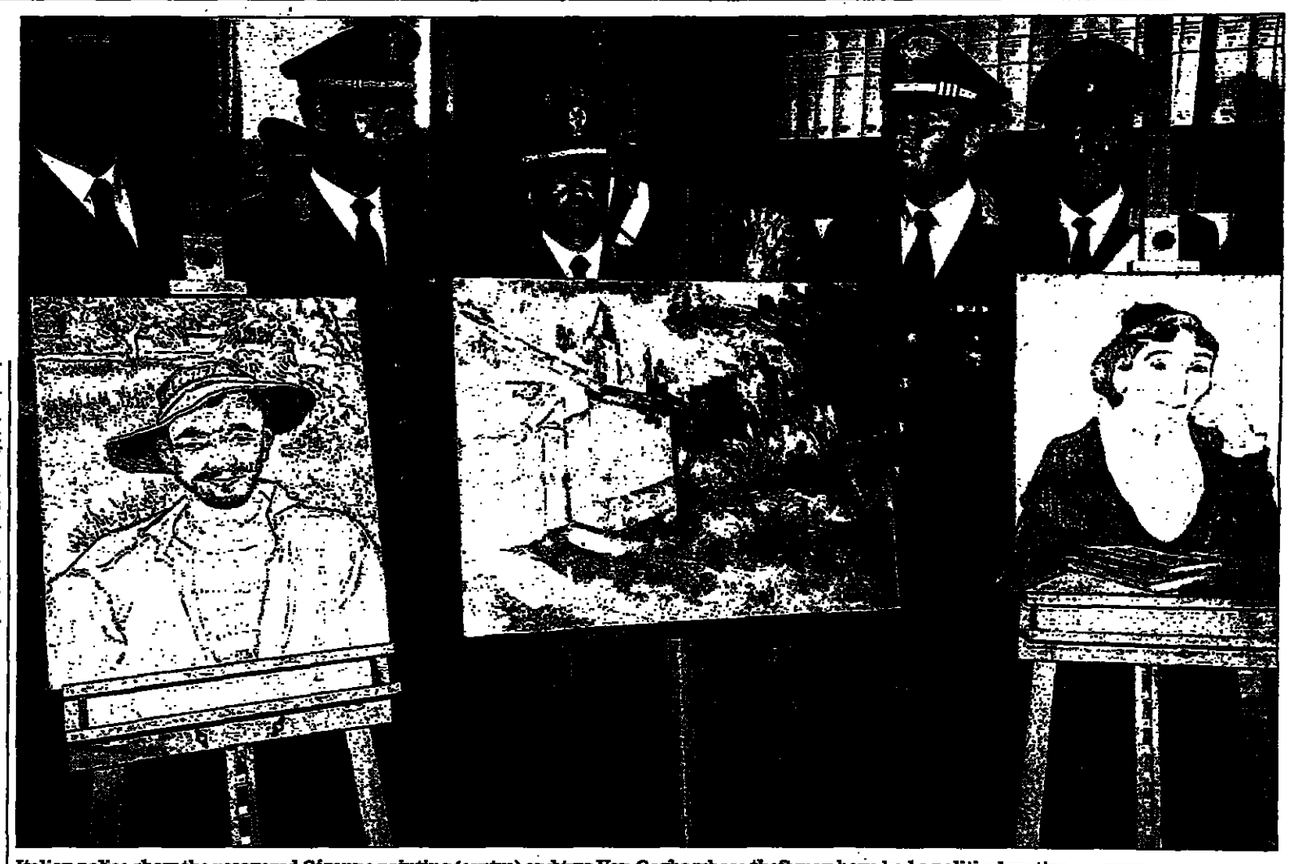
Cryptically, he set the theft in the context of a "reflowering of events that had seemed to have vanished from this country". General Roberto Conforti of the paramilitary Carabinieri described the inquiry as being "like investigating a sort of kidnapping, rather than a robbery".

But the prosecutor in charge of the case, Italo Ormanni, said: "Inquiries have not finished. Indeed, they have scarcely begun."

Art experts had stressed the paintings were too well known to be sold. Yet according to sources close to the investigation the robbers had sought a buyer and were ready to accept between 20 billion and 30 billion lire (£7–10 million). The Gardener alone was worth an estimated £15 million 10 years ago.

Mr Veltroni said: "I don't know if there were links with the Mafia. That will be up to the investigation to decide. I do know that it was a well organised and well armed gang."

The arsenal found included a sub-machine gun, two pump-action shotguns and bomb-making materials.



Italian police show the recovered Cézanne painting (centre) and two Van Goghs whose theft may have had a political motive PHOTOGRAPH: PLINIO LEPRI

Review

Sax man meets his solo mates

John Fordham

Michael Brecker/ Roy Haynes
Barbican

IT IS pretty hard to upstage Mike Brecker, the most influential saxophonist since his late hero John Coltrane. Whatever you play, Brecker can play it louder, faster, at wider extremes of the register, with more subtle variations of tone — and probably forwards, backwards and sideways as well.

But at the Barbican in the Inventing America series, Brecker found himself playing opposite a band that filled about the only gap that exists in his astonishing virtuosity.

This was the opening trio, featuring the veteran drummer Roy Haynes, a stocky, vibrant figure of 72 who looks as if he has not yet been troubled by his 50th birthday.

Like the late Art Blakey, Haynes is a percussionist who makes drum patterns sound like the shifting intensities of high winds or tides, seamlessly musical effects at the other end of the jazz spectrum to straight displays of crowd-baiting skill.

By his side he had two virtuosi, the Panamanian pianist Danilo Perez and the double-bassist John Pattitucci, a man who makes the big instrument sound as manageable and precise as a guitar.

Although the sound balance hampered Perez — whose shapely solos were often inaudible, but whose choppy chordwork mixed with Haynes's drums as if the pianist were a percussionist himself — the effect revealingly inverted the usual piano trio configuration, so that Haynes's dazzlingly varied drumming took on the melodic role, Perez's chords the offbeats and accents, and Pattitucci's fluent runs anchored the harmony.

The set was gripping from the word go, but the principal Haynes solo halfway through, beginning with a quietly insistent bass-drum rumble and stormy mallet-work, erupting into explosive snare sounds and incandescent cymbal shivers, was the kind of jazz phenomenon that stays in the mind for years.

The triumph of the Haynes band was to downplay set pieces and listen like hawks. Mike Brecker, on the other hand, is out promoting an album, so his freedom to manoeuvre is reduced.

But no Brecker show ever sells an audience short, and this group is as conversational as Haynes's. It's just that the themes are faster and more intense, and the group sound (strongly influenced by the John Coltrane quartet, and lately by a strong McCoy Tyner vibe) is very dense, so it's like a conversation between four people shouting.

They opened with a fast, skimming Brecker post-bop classic (Slings and Arrows, an old favourite), and the Tyner influence was quickly apparent in the churning, insistent El Nino, over James Genus's richly singing ostinato bass.

Joey Calderazzo played an exquisite piano overture to Cat's Cradle, an otherwise colourless tune, but Brecker's unaccompanied solo blast on Delta City Blues — he makes himself sound like an entire bar room rhythm 'n' blues band with awesome use of the lowest notes on the horn and flying runs in between — was the kind of performance no other saxophonist on the planet can touch.

'Sop' to Orangemen

Parades Commission opens route through Belfast nationalist area

John Mullin Ireland Correspondent

ORANGEMEN are to be allowed to march through a nationalist area in Belfast next week as the much criticised Parades Commission attempted last night to take the sting out of the Drumcree crisis, now in its third day.

Allstair Graham, chairman of the commission, said the Ballynafeigh lodge in south Belfast would be allowed to parade down the Lower Ormeau Road on Monday. It has banned the three previous marches there, and the Orange Order voluntarily abandoned its annual parade on July 12 last year in an effort to defuse tension.

Mr Graham said: "We recognise the very deep sense of hurt that exists in the Orange community. We are trying to show that, just as we wanted to break the cycle as far as Drumcree is concerned, we think it is sensible to break the cycle on Lower Ormeau Road."

There were skirmishes throughout Northern Ireland yesterday as Orangemen refused to move from fields by Drumcree Church, outside Portadown, Co Armagh. They said they would stay until they were allowed to march down the nationalist Garvaghy Road. The commission has banned them from their traditional route.

Mr Graham said: "Contrary to accusations from many quarters, we are not being influenced by political expediency. Nor are we out to support or destroy any individual organisation or faction."

The commission ruled that 17 of 28 Orange marches next Monday should be re-routed or restricted. But the most crucial was the Lower Ormean Road.

Gerard Rice, spokesman for the road's residents, said the commission had bowed to the threat of violence. He announced they would seek a judicial review.

Mr Rice added: "It will make no difference as far as the Garvaghy Road is concerned. It just means pain for this community and we have to go through another year before this boil is lanced."

Noel Ligget, district master of the Ballynafeigh lodge, called the commission inept.

The mood at Drumcree was muted. Hundreds converged on the fields at night, blockaded with trenches, barbed wire and steel barriers. But only a few hundred slept there, and the security force approach is to allow the peaceful protest.

The protesters erected loudspeakers to deliver their own message to the Garvaghy Road. They called it Radio Orange, banging the loud Lambeg drums into the night.

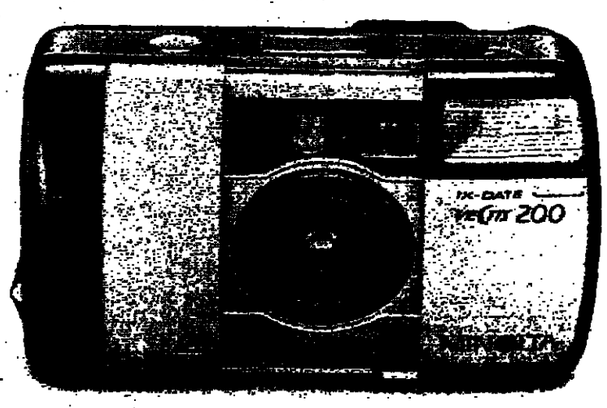
Almost 30,000 police and soldiers were on alert last night, as the Orange Order prepared unannounced protests around Northern Ireland.

David Trimble, first minister, spoke with Church and Orange Order leaders, warning the dispute could destabilise the push for peace. But he denied a report that he had threatened to resign.

Daybreak at Drumcree, page 4

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'I can have tea with Geoffrey Robinson – I can get to see Ed Balls'

Lobbyist Derek Draper



Winning friends and influencing people... Derek Draper's carefully constructed contacts book put him at the centre of New Labour life, socially and politically.

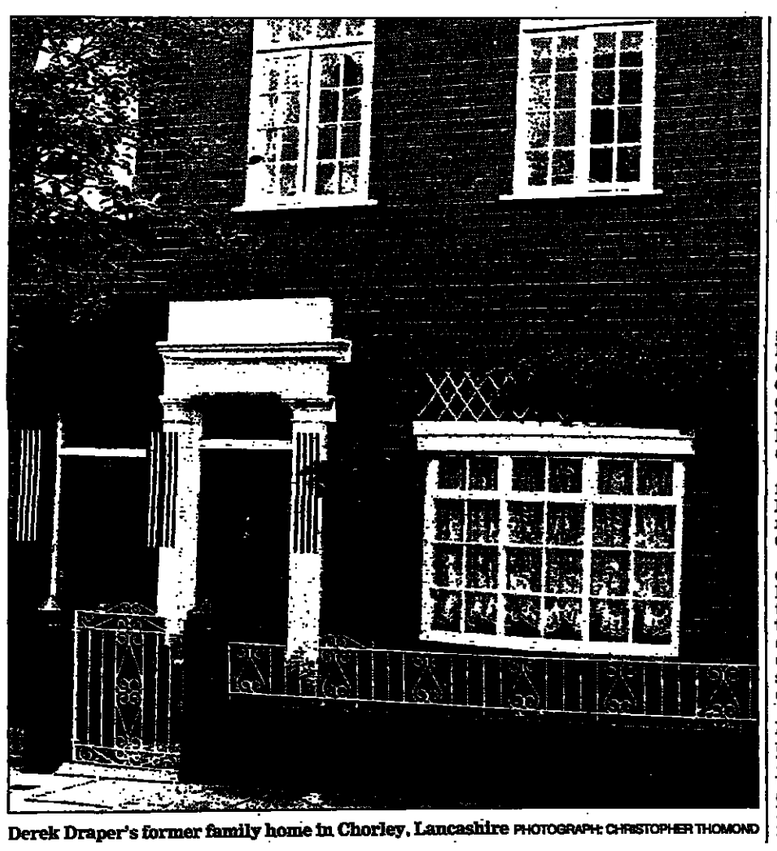
The lobbyists
Associated with the Labour party

Andy Kendall-Taylor	Now with Political International Former roles: Adviser to David Clark
Julian Brazier	Shared flat Rapid Rebuttal Unit
Chris Byrne	Shared flat Chief Labour Party Press Officer 1995-1997, aide to Peter Mandelson during General Election
Alastair Clark	Bell Pottinger Tony Blair's office
Sally Dewing	LLM Industry Forum
Derek Draper	GPC Adviser to Peter Mandelson
Richard Eberl	Lobbyists Deputy Head of Rapid Rebuttal Unit
Spencer Fender	Bell Pottinger Adviser to Mo Mowlam
Ian Happendon	Lobbyists Press Officer
David Hill	Bell Pottinger Chief Media Spokesman
Ben Jacobs	LLM Philip Gould's
Neal Lawson	LLM Adviser to Gordon Brown
John Lee	Westminster Strategy Adviser to David Blunkett
Bob Lyons	LLM Researcher for Jack Straw
Jonny Mandelson	LLM Tony Blair's office
Karl Milner	LLM Adviser to Gordon Brown
Jo Moore	Westminster Strategy Press Office
Jon Mule	AS Bliss Adviser to Alun Michael
Jim Page	Communication Group Adviser to Ian McCartney

'The thing about Derek is that he doesn't give a damn'

Friend of Draper

From Chorley to the charmed circle



Derek Draper's former family home in Chorley, Lancashire PHOTOGRAPH: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND

The fall of Derek Draper/ High hopes and tall tales that left a promising New Labourite on the outside without a look in

Luke Harding

IT IS a long and ambitious slog from a modest house in unfashionable Chorley, Lancashire, to the inner sanctum of government. That Derek Draper has managed it so quickly — only now to slip up on a giant banana skin of his own making — is testament both to his flawed genius and his capacity for self-destruction.

In his picaresque journey from humble student hack to Peter Mandelson's right-hand man, Draper has had plenty of adventures.

He has enlivened the gossip columns (flings with Lauren Booth, Cherie Blair's half-sister, and Charlotte Raven, who then went out with Julie Burchill), and has made plenty of enemies. Now, though, it seems his career has come crashing to a halt.

The 29-year-old former political researcher spent yesterday travelling back from a holiday in Italy to start contemplating his future. In London, the editor of the Express, Rosie Boycott, was busy sacking him from his job as columnist. Draper's crime was to fax his work for approval to Peter Mandelson, his old boss and the Minister Without Portfolio.

It was Mandelson who gave Draper his big break in politics, and it was Mandelson who yesterday washed his hands of his former aide, by letting it be known that he did not actually have time to read Draper's column in the Express. This was a wounding cut.

Back at the office where Draper works as a parliamentary lobbyist, GPC Market Access, there was more bad news: GPC announced that Draper had been suspended after passing details of government spending plans to an American investment bank.

His crime this time was shooting his mouth off, boasting of his privileged access to the Treasury and Downing Street — "I can have tea with Geoffrey Robinson [the Paymaster General], I can get into Ed Balls [the Chancellor's economic adviser]," he bragged.

From an early age, Draper's flair for self-aggrandisement has been evident. The son of a British Leyland shop steward, Draper grew up in Chorley — a small, solidly working class former industrial town, which swung over to Margaret Thatcher in the early 1980s.

His political career began while he was studying for A levels at a local college of further education. By the time he arrived at Manchester University in 1986 to read economics, he was a fully-fledged moderniser.

The university union was run by Trotskyites. Draper set about reclaiming the union for the mainstream Labour Party and defeating the far left, an early version of the battle Tony Blair would wage several years later.

It wasn't all politics, though. "His hit rate with women was sensational," one friend said. But another chipped in: "If Derek really had slept with all the women he claimed, there would be none in London left."

Draper rose as far as the union's communications officer before a piece of characteristic stupidity undid him. He took offence to an article written about him by a rival student publication, broke into an office, and poured paint over all the copies of the offending newspaper. For this act of foolishness he was thrown off the executive.

Regarded by friends as "very very clever" ("He got a 2:1 with very little work," one university friend said), he was rescued by Nick Brown, now Labour's chief whip, who offered him a job as his constituency secretary in Newcastle upon Tyne East. Already Draper was making friends in all the right places. (He met Peter Mandelson after inviting him to address a meeting of the Young Fabian Society.) However, Newcastle bored Draper, who made no secret of his metropolitan ambitions and his desire to get where the real action was.

Draper worked for Peter Mandelson for four years, after the future Minister Without Portfolio hired him as his chief aide-cum-researcher in 1992. They became very close. Draper acquired the nickname Muttley, to Mandelson's Dastardly, after the cartoon characters.

Other researchers distrusted Draper, disliking both his arrogance and his right-wing politics.

It was during this period that Draper started to drink, acquiring the louche, working-class-boy-made-good persona that would lead him to membership of the Groucho Club, a flat in Primrose Hill, and a flash Mercedes.

After leaving Mandelson's employ, Draper reinvented himself as a journalist and a lobbyist.

He became co-editor of the Blairite house journal Progress — writing eloquently about politics as if it were a service industry.

He was also quick to spot that there was money to be made from Labour's election victory. He became a partner in the lobbying company Prima Europe, later reportedly earning £150,000 when it was taken over. At the lobbyists GPC, he reputedly earned a six-figure salary. Although Draper claims to identify strongly with old lefties such as Roy Hattersley, his instincts are solidly neo-Thatcherite.

Draper's finest hour came last September, with the publication of his book, Blair's 100 Days. That the book was a bad one, cobbled together hastily from press cuttings, did not matter. ("Derek would be the first person to admit that it was terrible," one friend said.) The launch took place at Quo Vadis, Damien Hirst's ultra-trendy Soho restaurant, and signalled that Draper had arrived at the heart of political London. Champagne was served and Peter Mandelson turned up.

Since then it has all gone wrong. Draper has been frozen out by Downing Street, which has grown tired of his bragging. An article in May's Spectator, in which Draper confidently predicted that Rupert Murdoch would embrace the euro, spectacularly misfired when the Sun declared Blair the most dangerous man in Britain.

And Mr Mandelson, not wishing to do anything to diminish his chances of cabinet promotion, has abandoned his youthful protégé.

"The thing about Derek is that he doesn't give a damn," one friend said last night.

Labour millionaire is lobbyists' main backer

The firm/ Ties with ministers made company hottest in town

David Hencke and Ewen MacAskill

A PROMINENT Labour multi-millionaire businessman who once owned the Reebok trainers company emerged last night as the main backer behind Lawson Lucas Mendelsohn, the company embroiled in the row over political lobbying.

Neal Lawson, one of the company's directors, said: "Steve Rubin is the main venture capitalist behind our company, having put money in to set us up. He is also a shareholder."

Mr Rubin's main connection is with Jon Mendelsohn, one of the partners who founded the lobbying company, after working with him on Jewish charities. His main company is Pentland, a sports retailer which covers some 200 other companies.



The Labour supporter's investment enabled the fledgling lobbying company to get prestigious offices in Soho — to the surprise of many rivals.

LLM is one of the hottest lobbying companies in Britain. "It is a company whose time has come. They know how New Labour thinks," a colleague in a rival communications firm said yesterday.

It was set up last July, two months after Labour came to power. Its advantage was that its three founders had close ties with the new administration: Mr Lawson, a former adviser to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, and Ben Lucas and Mr Mendelsohn, former advisers to Tony Blair.

In its material sent to prospective clients, LLM describes itself as adopting an ethical approach: "Lawson Lucas Mendelsohn is as careful about its reputation as it is about its clients — and can only serve its clients effectively by taking such an approach. We will not just work for anyone because it 'pays'."

The company has taken a number of clients from rivals. Lord Bell's company, where Mr Lawson and Mr Lucas previously worked, has lost Tesco's, accountants KPMG and the Orange mobile phone company to them. LLM has since added News International; accountants Deloitte and Touche; Anglian Water; the political lobbying operations of the Audit Commission; and the charity Shelter.

But it has found itself embroiled in the controversy over lobbyists' influence within the government machine. Mr Lucas is alleged to have claimed he knew the contents of the Chancellor's Mansion House speech days before it was delivered.

Good money for nearly new rope

The system/ Impressing the gullible with gossipy tidbits

Ewen MacAskill and Larry Elliot

LOBBYISTS can make upwards of £250 an hour for little effort by trading on the ignorance of businessmen about Parliament. "Westminster is a foreign country to most of them," a lobbyist said yesterday.

The information they peddle, which can easily impress outsiders, is often easy to obtain. The lobbyists involved in the present row boasted of inside information but in almost every case it was readily available.

Take the case of the lobbyist who leaked the conclusions of a Commons select committee. At first glance, Karl Milner, who works for GJW Government Relations, pulled off an impressive coup. A US consultant, Gregory Palast, approached him, claiming to be working on behalf of American energy companies. Mr Milner responded by faxing to him the conclusions of the Commons trade and industry select committee report on energy, 24 hours before its publication.

The report might sound dry but it contained market-sensitive information. Overseas energy companies investing in Britain would welcome an advance of the committee's conclusions on gas-fired power stations.

But Mr Milner's trick was not as impressive as it might have seemed. Copies of such reports are often made available 24 hours in advance to lobby journalists, or to select organisations such as lobbying firms, who can pick up copies at 7 Millbank, part of Parliament, situated opposite Westminster. Mr Milner, intent on impressing Mr Palast, broke the embargo.

The Government yesterday blamed much of the controversy on young lobbyists puffing out their chests and boasting, attempting to impress gullible businessmen with tidbits of Westminster gossip.

Derek Draper, a director with GPC lobbyists, boasted he had scooped the world with his prediction of Gordon Brown's public spending plans. That did not impress the Treasury yesterday.

"The idea that anyone at the Treasury would brief Draper is laughable," a source said: Mr Brown and the Minister Without Portfolio, Peter Mandelson, have been engaged in a long feud and Mr Draper was seen as being in Mr Mandelson's camp.

Certainly, Mr Draper's claim of being on the inside track in predicting Mr Brown's spending targets will not impress anyone at the City firm Goldman Sachs.

Six days before the Chancellor announced his three-year targets for government expenditure, David Walton, chief UK economist with the firm and a former Treasury official, accurately forecast the main thrust of the statement.

Mr Walton said the Government could increase overall spending by 2.75 per cent a year and still meet its tough fiscal rules. Although Treasury officials refused to confirm Mr Walton's figures, they did little to suggest they were wide of the mark.

Woke up at 3am to scuttling sound coming from my loft. Rang Council Pest Control in the morning, and they sent a man round with equipment and small cages. He took a look upstairs, then came down and said "I'm terribly sorry, but you've got Wombles."
Armando Iannucci on his unwelcome guests

G2 page 9

All that matters is love and work.
Sigmund Freud 1856 - 1939: attributed



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BBC





Liz Hurley and Hugh Grant, ranked sixth, and Salman Rushdie, who despite the fatwa is also deemed a highly desirable guest

Elton John top of party chart

Sarah Hall

WHEN it came to his 50th birthday party, he lavished £200,000 on a fancy-dress ball, hiring out the Hammersmith Palais — and a removal van to transport himself in his £50,000, eight-foot-high costume.

He led the peace agreement celebrations at Stormont, and took centre stage at the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. So it should come as no surprise that Sir Elton John receives more party invitations than anyone else.

The multi-millionaire singer-songwriter tops a list compiled by Tatler, the upper-crust social bible, of the 250 most sought-after guests at the 250 most flamboyant parties in the nation.

The figures were gleaned by sifting through the 75,000 names on guest lists — from lavish corporate events to the society wedding of Hello! staples Henry and Lili Dent-Brocklehurst. Each invitee was given an "invite-rate", with Sir Elton receiving 187 out of a possible 250 invitations — and so a 74.8 per cent score.

The 51-year-old Watford football club chairman was hotly pursued by Ed and Carol Victor, the flamboyant literary agent and lawyer; former Arts Council chairman Lord Palumbo and his wife; and Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall, the ultimate celebrity couple.

Viscount and Viscountess Linley, the highest-scoring royals, come in at number five, followed by showbiz's regal equivalent, Liz Hurley and Hugh Grant. Tony and Cherie Blair just make it into the top 10 — and share their slot with Telegraph proprietor Conrad Black and his wife Barbara Amiel.

Tatler editor Jane Procter said the list — which boasts only 62 titled individuals and couples and a raft of models, actors, artists, entrepreneurs, restaurateurs and politicians — reflected the increasing fluidity of the social system.

"The old rule about it taking three generations to become an aristocrat has shifted, and there are now more recent aristocrats."

She said celebrities ensured parties were snapped for the social pages of the likes of Tatler, or Harpers & Queen. "People want paparazzi fodder at their parties.

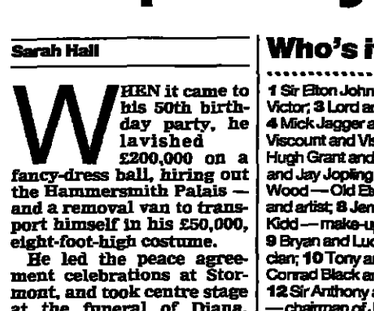
"But they also invite people who they know are good at parties. That's why you get someone who's relatively unknown like Ed Victor at number two — he's just great fun," she added.

Of Sir Elton, she said: "He comes highest because he touches so many different worlds: football, pop, fashion, films, shopping."

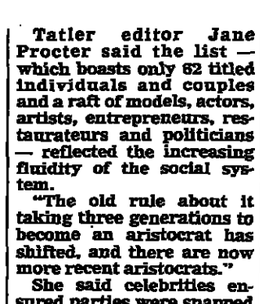
A spokesman said Elton John was surprised, and played down his party-animal label. "He doesn't go out that much and tends not to accept these invites because he's out of the country most of the time. He tends to entertain at home — and he's happy with his own company."

Who's it

1 Sir Elton John; 2 Ed and Carol Victor; 3 Lord and Lady Palumbo; 4 Mick Jagger and Jerry Hall; 5 Viscount and Viscountess Linley; 6 Hugh Grant and Elizabeth Hurley and Jay Jopling and Sam Taylor Wood — Old Etonian art dealer and artist; 8 Jemma and Jodie Kidd — make-up artist and model; 9 Bryan and Lucy Ferry — musician; 10 Tony and Cherie Blair and Conrad Black and Barbara Amiel; 12 Sir Anthony and Lady Bamford — chairman of JCB; 13 Leo and Jilly Cooper — publisher and author; 14 Sir Charles and Lady Powell — political adviser; 15 Tara Palmer-Tomkinson — it girl; 16 Lady Annabel Goldsmith — widow of Sir James; 17 Nicky Haslam — interior designer; 18 The Hon Sir Rocco and Lady Forte — hotelier; 19 Lord and Lady Hindlip — chairman of Christie's International; 20 Salman Rushdie — novelist



Former Arts Council chairman Lord Palumbo, who with his wife is third in the list of sought-after guests, and 'It' girl Tara Palmer-Tomkinson





Elton John getting into the party mood and, nine places behind him in the list, the Blairs



Radio 3 chief quits to shape BBC coverage of millennium

Dan Glaister
Arts Correspondent

HE outraged a generation of listeners, who held him responsible for a decline in standards of pronunciation. But others saw him as the saviour of a moribund classical music station as he dragged it into the modern age.

After six years of struggling to turn BBC Radio 3 around, Nicholas Kenyon is leaving as controller to take charge of the corporation's millennium programmes. For a further five years he will continue to manage the Proms.

Announcing his move yesterday, Mr Kenyon said: "I've had a challenging and exhilarating time at Radio 3 and, with the help of many colleagues, have taken the network forward while enhancing its commitment to new work and live music."

His last reform at Radio 3, announced late last year, went against the Classic FM blueprint many had accused him of following. Instead of opting for light presenters and an easy-listening format, he brought in comparative heavyweights such as Richard Baker and Joan Bakewell.

But Mr Kenyon always worked within the confines of the market. It was incumbent upon him, he argued, to increase audience share. At what point that mission should be sacrificed for the sake of the music was the shifting reality of his stewardship of Radio 3.

Will Wyatt, BBC Broadcast chief executive, said: "He has proved an outstanding impresario, mounting memorable and innovative broadcasting events as well as sustaining the Proms as one of the glories of British cultural life."

The Proms, too, came in for criticism under Mr Kenyon. This year's events feature George Gershwin and Bob Marley, while last year's had music by Frank Zappa.

Speaking of his new role, Mr Kenyon said: "There is a huge opportunity to make the most of the vast range of talent across the BBC to create a unique celebration of the millennium. We can offer something for everyone, and draw the nation together to reflect on the past, celebrate the moment and look to the future."

Millennium coverage will include a TV history of Britain by Simon Schama and a radio oral history of the 20th century. The BBC has also expressed interest in broadcasting the celebrations in the Millennium Dome on New Year's Eve 1999.

Isle of Wight dinosaur was 'graceful, awesome killer'

John Ezard

A NEW breed of swift, hunting dinosaur — a third bigger than the velociraptors in the film Jurassic Park — has been unearthed in Britain, it was claimed yesterday.

The creature was 15-16ft long, with a huge tail and monstrously long hands and claws, according to the palaeontologist Steve Hutt, curator of the geology museum at Sandown, Isle of Wight.

"Nothing quite like it has been seen before. It was incredibly graceful as well as being very tough."

Its remains, sunk in a cliff on the island's south coast, were found by an amateur fossil collector and will be discussed on Radio 4's Dinosaur Deadline programme today.

Mr Hutt said the creature was a previously unknown species of dinosaur which combined grace and speed with awesome killing ability. His checks with museums around the world had shown it was new to science.

The animal, whose teeth are preserved with minute cutting edges, had 3ft long arms, 6ft long legs and a tail 8ft or 9ft long. "It would have looked a little like a miniature Tyrannosaurus Rex. It was ground-dwelling, lithe and whippy. It moved very fast as it hunted."

Unearthed so far are a part of the skull, the hands and arms, pieces of the feet and the tail, and ribs and other vertebrae.

A year ago Mr Hutt discovered Neovenator Salerii, a 26ft smaller version of Tyrannosaurus Rex, on the same site. He said the new find had been examined by Dave Martill of Portsmouth University.

Day breaks over Drumcree

Stuart Millar finds morale high among Orangemen at encampment as marchers prepare for day two of stand-off

FROM cars and vans they stirred, shaking the feeling back into limbs after an uncomfortable night. At 5am yesterday the Orangemen in a field opposite Drumcree parish church, their sashes and collarettes in place, were already preparing for day two of their stand-off.

They moved groggily about their business after an hour or two of sleep snatched when the field had eventually fallen quiet, though never completely still. Twice army and police in riot gear had moved towards the lines of barbed wire between the Orangemen and the nationalist Garvaghy estate. "They're moving in," they shouted, bringing people leaping from their cars, some stumbling down the road to the barricades as they tried to pull on their shoes.

Yet none was showing any hint of wanting to go home. "It isn't too comfortable in the car," said Mark Smith, a fireman. "But I'm well used to a bit of sleep deprivation, so it is no problem at all. And what we're doing is for the best."

In the sombre light of morning, the scene contrasted with the almost carnival atmosphere a few hours earlier. Then the field that has become a sprawling Orange encampment bustled with hundreds of men digging in for the night.

As darkness fell, fast food stalls did a roaring trade as thousands of supporters, three or four generations of a family in many cases, flooded in to show solidarity with their brethren. It was a heaving display of defiance, tinged with frustration, which signalled clearly their intention to stay for as long as it takes.

Ian Paisley underlined that uncompromising message. His appearance just before midnight sent a roar round the crowds.

The Democratic Unionist leader does not approve of activity on Sundays. So at 12.01am yesterday the beating of a lambeg drum hushed the crowds before another flute band marched down the barricades and back to the church gates. An hour later Mr Paisley made the same journey. "This is a battle that must be won," he told them. "No ifs, no buts."

Five hundred yards away across the "sterile zone" enforced by the security forces, the Garvaghy Road was virtually deserted, the tension of Sunday replaced by a gradual boredom. Residents were beginning to believe the RUC's promise not to let the Orangemen through.

But on the Orange side of the battle lines people remained confident. "We have settled in here now," said David Jones, Portadown Orange order spokesman. "There are only two ways we are leaving: one is if they let the parades through; the other is if the army and police come in and force us back. But even if they force us all the way back to the Orange hall in Portadown, we will stay there and they will have to stay with us."

He spoke as the mood lifted again among the Orangemen. Elsewhere, Northern Ireland has been warned of the cost of Drumcree to its tourist industry, but beside the barricades "Orange tourism" thrived.

As relatives brought in food supplies, people sat on picnic mats between tents or cars. Families posed for snaps under the steel barricades, where children clambered over concrete blocks.

Across the field boys playing football by the barbed wire tossed cameras to troops on the other side and asked them to take a picture. The soldiers obliged, casually tossing the cameras back.

It could be a long haul. "Orangemen feel that they have given enough," said one senior member of the Tandragee Lodge. "People feel that their way of life and their culture is being forced out."





An Orangeman in marching gear and (right) a soldier shaves in an army vehicle PHOTOGRAPHS: CRISPIN RODWELL and PAUL McERLANE

Parliament designer pushes the boat out

Dan Glaister
Arts Correspondent

GLASGOW has an armadillo, and now Edinburgh is to have an upturned boat. Sir Norman Foster's armadillo shell design for a conference centre in Glasgow will be echoed by the new building for the Scottish parliament in Edinburgh. At least, that is the idea.

The competition to design the new parliament building was won yesterday by Catalan architect Enric Miralles, in association with Edinburgh-based RMJM (Scotland) Ltd.

But Mr Miralles immediately refused to commit himself to his winning proposal, which was inspired by the upturned keels of boats.

Asked whether his plans would continue on the same theme, he said: "That's part of the suspense". Describing his initial plan as a "conversation" he said: "I am trying to do a fantastic building, it will be beautiful and in a beautiful location."

Mr Miralles, whose previous projects include a new town hall in Utrecht and an archery pavilion for the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, was praised by Scottish Secretary Donald Dewar, announcing the winner from an initial entry of 70, which was cut to a list of five.

"He is an architect with an international reputation with a very impressive record. I am certain that we have made a very sound and imaginative decision," Mr Dewar said.

The proposal had won because of the Catalan architect's "energy, imagination and creative approach to designing a parliament building within the World Heritage Site at Holyrood.

"The panel liked the sensitivity and scale of his initial ideas, which provide a blueprint for an exciting new building at the foot of the Royal Mile that sits well with the spectacular backdrop of Holyrood Park and Salisbury Crags."

Professor Andy McMillan, one of the panel who chose the finalists, said: "It is going to be a group of quite small public buildings with a debating chamber which will stress that the parliament is not adversarial."

Construction work on the building, which will incorporate wood, stone and metal, is due to begin in July next year. The parliament's first meeting there is due in the autumn of 2001.





Enric Miralles with his design right. PHOTOGRAPHS: MURDO MacLEOD, DON McPHEE



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Businessman who swindled clients of millions murdered associate whose identity he had stolen ☐ Rolex watch proved vital clue

Conman murdered to hide double life



Victim Ronald Platt: thrown into the sea

Walker hit him over the head with a 10lb anchor



Sheena Walker: fled Canada with father and changed name



Albert Walker: turned killer to avoid his change of identity being exposed

Nick Hopkins

A FUGITIVE businessman who escaped to Britain and began a new life with a stolen identity was convicted of murder yesterday.

Albert Walker killed Ronald Platt because he feared being exposed. He had assumed Mr Platt's name and used his driving licence, birth certificate and bank accounts to shield him from the police.

When Mr Platt, aged 51, was on the verge of discovering his secret, Walker hit him over the head with a 10lb anchor and threw him over the side of his yacht, the Lady Jane, into the Channel.

Walker made one mistake. He left Mr Platt wearing his Rolex Oyster watch. It provided detectives with details that identified his body and set them on a trail which finally led to Walker.

Sentencing Walker to life imprisonment, Mr Justice Butterfield said the murder was "a callous, premeditated killing".

The jury at Exeter Crown Court took two hours to find the 52-year-old guilty, ending an 11-day trial which exposed his convoluted double life.

Walker fled Canada in December 1990 during a divorce battle with his wife, Barbara. A successful financial consultant, he feared he would be bankrupted by the settlement.

Walker, of Woodham Walter, Essex, disappeared with his 15-year-old daughter Sheena, taking with him millions of dollars stolen from his clients.

When the Canadian police investigated the fraud, they contacted Interpol. However, the charismatic businessman had covered his tracks.

After touring Europe, he and Sheena settled in a flat in west London. Walker changed his name to David Davis — one of the men he had defrauded — and Sheena became known as his daughter Noelle. They remained in the capital for eight months before moving to Harrogate.

During a visit to North Yorkshire to find a house, Walker met Elaine Boyes, an assistant at an antiques shop. He discovered that she and her boyfriend, Ronald Platt, dreamt of emigrating to Canada, and promised to help them realise their ambition.

He made them directors of an electrical repair company but retained control of the firm's finances, using the account to launder money.

In 1992, on Christmas Day, Walker gave the couple one-way tickets to Calgary. Within two months, Mr Platt and Miss Boyes were on their way. Mr Platt handed Walker personal documents for safe keeping; once the couple were out the country, Walker began calling himself Ronald Platt, and his daughter now became his wife Noelle.

However, his new life was soon under threat. Miss Boyes returned to the UK within three months. She tried to meet Walker, but found him unfriendly on the phone.

Two years later Mr Platt also came home, penniless and depressed, and turned to Walker for help. He could not find work, was drinking heavily and was probably aware that Walker was using his name for business purposes.

"We believe he regarded Mr Platt as a serious risk to his new life," said an officer in the inquiry.

In July 1996, the two men went to Totnes, south Devon, for a short holiday. On the July 20, Walker lured Mr Platt on to his yacht and sailed four miles out to sea. During the voyage, he hit Mr Platt with an anchor, tucked it into his trousers and threw him overboard.

The inquiry would have come to nothing if Walker had thought to remove his watch. Although it was not engraved, it had service details on the inside which enabled experts to identify Mr Platt as the owner.

Speaking to Mr Platt's friends in Harrogate, detectives found a mobile phone number for Mr Davis — Walker's first alias.

The police realised something was afoot when an officer went to see him. Neighbours told the officer that Ronald Platt lived in the house Walker had given as his address, not Mr Davis.

The watch also provided the police with essential clues. It had stopped at 11.35 on July 22. The model was built to continue ticking for 40 hours after it had been last wound, giving detectives a good idea when Mr Platt had died. A global positioning system on Walker's boat showed it had been in the area where Mr Platt's body was found, and one of Mr Platt's fingerprints was discovered on a plastic bag on the yacht.

After the verdict, Miss Boyes said: "Ron was extremely honest, kind and gentle. But he was conned — we were both conned. Right up until the last moments of his life he was being conned."

Walker's story has generated enormous interest among publishers and movie makers. Miss Boyes is writing a book about the tragedy, and two others — by Canadian journalists — are planned.

Channel 4's Film on Four announced yesterday it would fund a full-length feature, produced by the independent film-makers Little Bird.

Victim: Platt trusted his 'friend' to take care of him

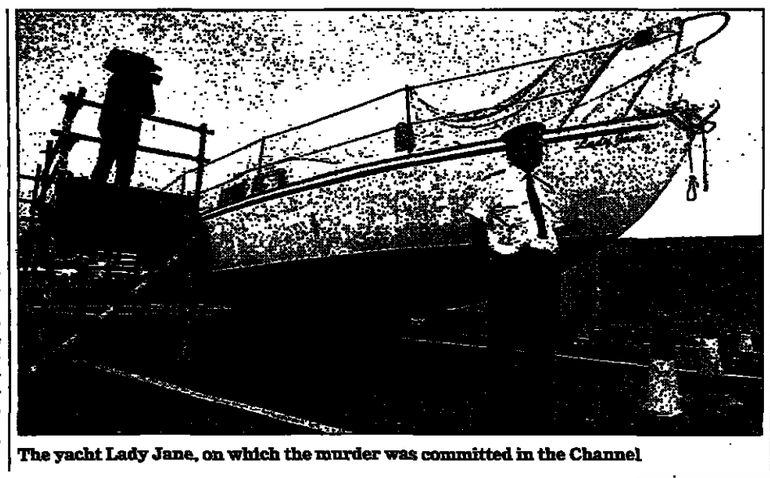
Nick Hopkins

RONALD Platt was a hapless figure who was easily manipulated by Walker. The court heard he failed at almost everything he tried. He thought Walker believed in him — a misjudgment that cost him his life.

Mr Platt was fascinated by Canada. He had moved there with his parents and younger brother, Brian, in the mid-1950s, aged 10, and stayed for six years. He regarded the country as his spiritual home, and dreamt about returning.

Shortly after his 18th birthday, he joined the army, training as a wireless operator and mechanic. He married in 1965 and had a son, but his wife Brenda left him after only a few years. After resigning from the forces, he moved to Harrogate, north Yorkshire, as a TV repairman. There he met Elaine Boyes, a 21-year-old secretary.

When he first tried to emigrate, he left the UK without a valid work permit. After returning from Canada to the UK in 1995 he became seriously depressed. Walker's suggestion that they take a holiday in Totnes, south Devon, was regarded as a kindness. He trusted his "friend" to take care of him.



The yacht Lady Jane, on which the murder was committed in the Channel

Killer: Calm, assurance and claim of dinner with Reagan

Nick Hopkins

ALBERT Walker was unflappable. A less arrogant man might have floundered as the prosecution unpicked the tangle of lies. Yet he was calm, showing the self-assurance which duped investors and almost engineered the perfect murder.

Born in Ontario, Walker had no economic business qualifications but relied on charm to attract a thousand clients for his investment business, Walker Financial Services.

He drove a Jaguar, wore designer suits and went on holidays to Europe. He claimed to have dined with Ronald Reagan, and to have shared champagne on Concorde with Rod Stewart.

In 1990, his wife Barbara discovered he was having an affair and filed for divorce. Walker was beside himself and threatened to kill her.

Police in Canada believe he realised his double-dealing was about to be exposed. He fled with currency and gold bars worth an estimated £6 million to Switzerland and then Britain. Thirty of his investors were left penniless, including pensioners who lost their life savings. Accountants are still trying to trace his assets, though 12 gold bars and £100,000 were found hidden at his home in Essex.

Walker fled accompanied by his daughter Sheena, then aged 15. She remained his constant companion, lying to protect him, and ultimately posing as his wife, Noelle.

She had two daughters, Emily, now aged four, and Lily, two, whilst she was living in Britain.

Both birth certificates list Ronald Platt as the father. But at no stage during Miss Walker's evidence did she refer to a relationship with the real Mr Platt.

The paternity was not addressed in court and Miss Walker, now back in Ontario living with her mother, has not clarified the issue.

Sweet memories and a taste for nostalgia

Martin Wainwright

SOME of the world's most fattening recipes are to be rescued with the help of a government grant, after fears that dietary habits are driving them into oblivion.

Vast quantities of butter, lard and treacle recipes have been sent to researchers in North Yorkshire, who are organising the project with funds from the Countryside Commission. Nodden Cakes — a haymaking speciality, "holy" St Wilfred Tarts, and a jammy dough ball called Kiss Me Pudding are back on the menu to test for quantities and ingredients.

"It's a case of save them now or lose them for ever," said Ann Johnson, head of the scheme, co-ordinated by Age Concern, whose clients are seen as a rich source of kitchen history.

The pilot project will focus on recipes from rural parts of the North, where cookery relating to local customs was traditionally strong. Mrs Johnson is on the track of more than 10 types of elderflower champagne — a bargain drink at country weddings — and a concoction called Stamford Bridge Pear Pie, first cooked to celebrate King Harold's victory over the Danes in 1066.

"The idea came from chat among pensioners at our day centres," she said. "It was obvious that they had a vast knowledge of recipes which we never hear of nowadays. There's also been enormous debate over the correct way to make Yorkshire Pudding. One elderly woman insists that her mother was only happy in winter, when she could add snow."

The £3,500 Countryside Commission grant will fund testing and research, with hotels and colleges enlisted to experiment with oak-leaf wine and Todmorden Crumble. The project is likely to be copied nationally, after the success of similar studies of dialects and rural customs.

Kiss Me Sweet

Mix energetically ¼lb butter, ¼lb sugar and ¼lb flour with ½ teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda and two eggs. Knead into rough shape, spread with two tablespoonfuls raspberry jam, steam for two hours.

MacTyke Pudding (Yorkshire pudding with oats)

Soak and then wring dry ½lb breadcrust and mix vigorously in a well-greased, preferably unwashed tin with 3oz suet, two tablespoonfuls oatmeal, one egg, milk as consistency requires, two large onions parboiled and chopped, two tablespoonfuls of sage and a pinch of marjoram. Cook for 45-60 minutes in a very hot oven.

Aherne takes overdose

Helen Carter

CAROLINE Aherne, right, creator of the Mrs Merton Show, was taken to hospital early yesterday after apparently taking an overdose.



Police were called to her flat in Kensington in west London in the early hours after a relative was unable to get a response. The 34-year-old comedienne was released from hospital yesterday afternoon after treatment.

Last night she was at her home being looked after by friends.

A Scotland Yard spokesman confirmed that police had found only one person when they called and had summoned an ambulance.

Her press officer, Carmel Morgan, said: "I have spoken to her several times since she has been released from hospital and she is okay — I think that she will rise above this. At the moment she is writing a Mrs Merton sitcom and episodes of the Royal Family."

Ms Morgan denied that the drama had been caused by Ms Aherne's breakup with her boyfriend, Alexis Denisof, in February. Her former lover, Matt Bowers, died of stomach cancer last year.

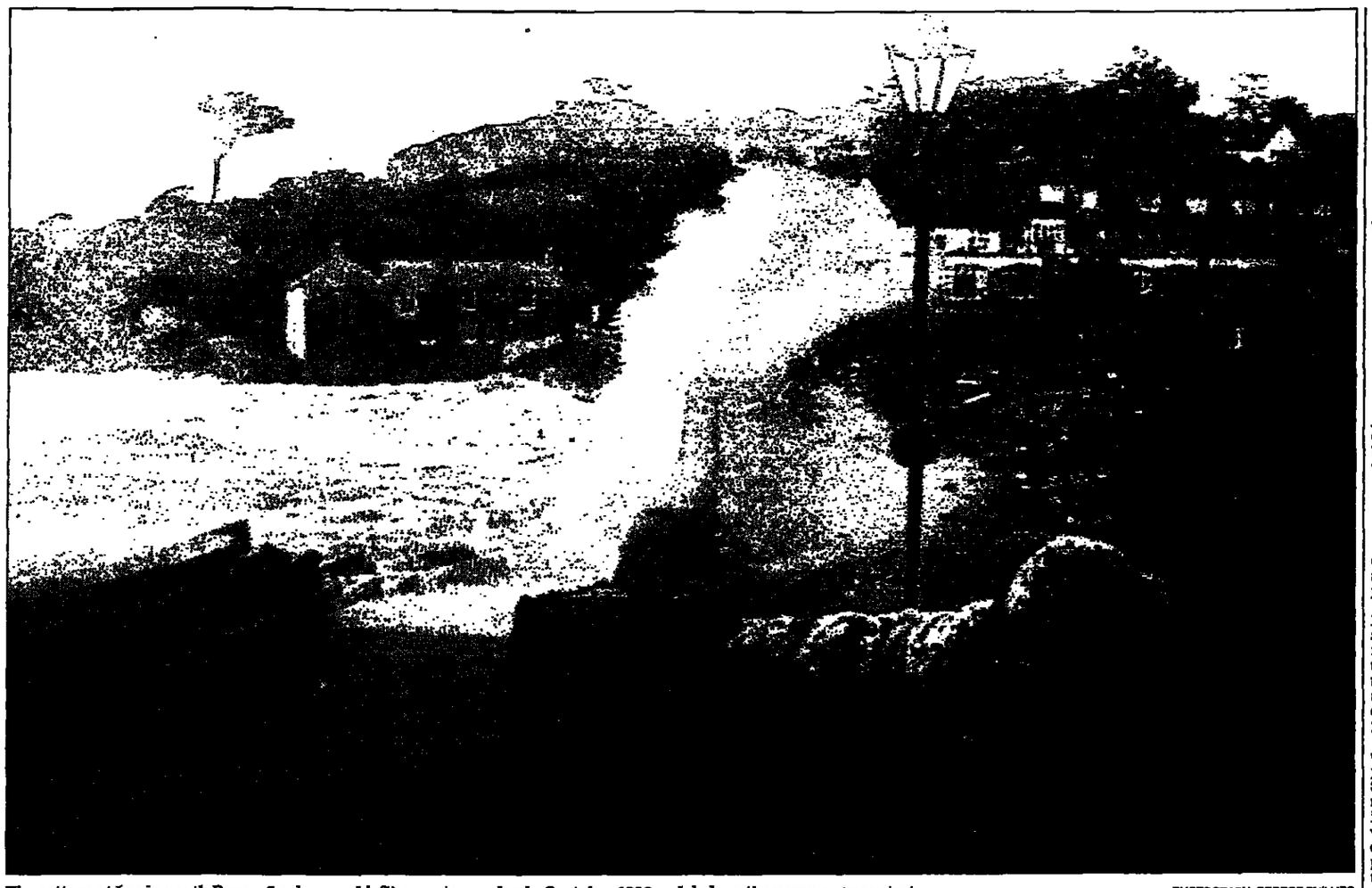
In the Mrs Merton shows on BBC, she plays a sardonic geriatric interviewer, and famously once asked Debbie McGee: "So what first attracted you to millionaire Paul Daniels?"

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The cottage at Lee in north Devon (background left) on a stormy day in October 1996 and, below, the newspaper contest PHOTOGRAPH: GEORGE PHILLIPS

Dream offer to be taken with pinch of salt

Seductive prose on prize cottage fails to mention storm damage

Amelia Gentleman

THE description sounds enchanting. "Set in a secluded bay with breathtaking views of the sea and the beautiful surrounding coastline", the 16th-century stone cottage is being offered as a lavish prize in a newspaper draw.

Few readers could have failed to have been entranced by the picture of the Old Mill House, on the bay of Lee, near Ilfracombe, North Devon, conjured up by the Daily Mail's competition blurb and the picturesque photographs.



But potential entrants should beware. The description does not match up to reality. The apparently idyllic cottage which had been on the market at £195,000 could prove to be more of a damp liability.

The paper promises magnificent sea views and says a lucky reader could wake up "every day to the sound of the waves lapping against the shore".

But it gives no hint that occupants could find themselves swept away not just by the sight of the coastline but by the waves themselves, which gush inside the house during the fiercest storms.

In the past the sea has smashed through the windows and flooded the ground floor to waist level. Occupants of the Grade II listed cottage used to live on the first floor to escape the regular flood danger.

The 1996 Hurricane Lili gave the previous owner, Vivienne Dobson, a taste of fame when her experience of the devastating floods became national news. "The sea is in my blood," she said at the time. "Sadly, it's also in my living room."

The storm caused so much damage that she was forced to take the property off the market; all the furniture on the ground floor was smashed. "It was terrifying. I was in the courtyard trying to keep the water out but the waves smashed through the french windows and the doors and the sea just flowed through the house."

The Mail makes no mention of the risk of flooding but, conscious that the stone building can appear bleak, brought in plants and flowers and tacked ivy to the walls for a more picturesque aspect.

Neighbour Gina Witts, 47, who considered buying the house three years ago, before deciding to buy a cottage set further back from the sea, said: "No flowers would grow there naturally, it's too exposed.

"If you come here on a sunny day, it is absolute paradise, but if there's a north-westerly wind blowing and the tide is high, you can get huge waves coming in. It is a beautiful building and it would be a dream cottage if it was just 100 yards up the road."

The managing editor of the Mail, Lawrence Sear, denied the house was anything less than the "fabulous hideaway" promised. "The Old Mill has stood for over 400 years and has braved everything the elements have thrown at it even during the 1996 hurricane," he said.

Tobacco firms win a hearing

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

FOUR tobacco companies yesterday won the go-ahead for a High Court challenge to a report calling for bans on tobacco advertising and smoking in public places.

British American, Gallaher, Imperial and Rothmans are to seek an injunction banning the Government from taking the report of the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health (Scoth) into account in formulating a white paper on smoking.

Mr Justice Moses said it was arguable that the report, published last March by Scoth — the Government's main advisory body on smoking — contained passages which might do "commercial damage" to the tobacco companies. It was also arguable that they should have been consulted and given the chance to comment before it was published.

The report suggested the industry was targeting the young and vulnerable to recruit the 300 new smokers a day needed to replace those who died from smoking-related diseases.

The judge in the High Court gave the companies leave to seek judicial review of the report, which they claim was flawed because it gave them no chance to reply to criticism, addressed areas outside its stated terms of reference, and rejected the companies' submissions without giving scientific reasons.

But the Department of Health said that all but one of the industry's complaints had been rejected by the judge.

Leave to seek judicial review was granted "on the narrow point" that Scoth should have consulted the industry before including the opinions of a marketing person on the industry's marketing and promotions strategy. The decision did not impugn the accuracy of the advisory body's conclusions, the department said in a statement.

The industry claims it was frozen out by Scoth after having been fully consulted by its predecessor, the Independent Scientific Committee on Smoking and Health. It says its input was sought on only one issue: that of passive smoking and lung cancer.

The companies say Scoth's recommendation of a ban on smoking in the workplace is not justified by the given evidence, which does not show any statistically significant increased risk. The advisory body is expected to provide the evidence that will form the basis for the Government's pending white paper on smoking.

Jonathan Sumption, QC, for the companies — which together have 90 per cent of the UK market — told the court on Friday that the industry had been "stung" by the "damning" report. In particular, Scoth had adopted the opinion of a pharmaceuticals marketing manager that the tobacco industry was deliberately setting out "to recruit new smokers to replace the ones ... killed".

Chris Proctor, head of science and regulation for British American Tobacco, yesterday welcomed the High Court opportunity and described parts of the report accusing the tobacco industry of targeting children and non-smokers as "absolutely outrageous".

Judge Moses said the Scoth report appeared to be an attack on the "commercial morality" of the tobacco companies. The advisory body had chosen to record remarks which had the potential power to cause instant and irreparable damage.

> 'The industry was said to be trying to recruit new smokers to replace the ones killed'

Even though the "nature of the conclusions" reached by the advisory body were not open to legal challenge, it was arguable that Scoth should have paused to consider giving the tobacco industry the opportunity to comment before publishing the criticism."

Clive Bates, director of the pressure group ASH (Action on Smoking and Health), said the industry continued to deny the most basic facts about smoking. "They are acting like the King Canutes of the 20th century, trying to hold back a tide of fact and evidence that will eventually overwhelm their entire operation."

Angela Hilton, of the British Thoracic Society, said: "This is a desperate attempt by the industry to sabotage a review which aims to inform the Government and the public of the serious consequences of passive smoking to the nation's health."

Sun lays into 'dinosaur' BBC

Kamal Ahmed
Media Editor

AFTER Tony Blair, the BBC. The Sun chose a new target upon which to vent its spleen yesterday with an excoriating attack describing the corporation as an overweight dinosaur.

In a leader column which immediately raised the issue of cross-media ownership, the newspaper said that the Government should "cut off the supply of taxpayers' money" to the BBC.

The Sun's owner, Rupert Murdoch, also has a major stake in BSkyB, the BBC's rival for viewers which is about to launch its own digital television service.

Although BBC programmes will appear on Sky's service, the corporation is also backing Sky's digital rival, British Digital Broadcasting, which will launch towards the end of the year.

Digital television will give viewers who pay for the decoders access to more channels and will be the biggest television revolution since colour.

"Today the BBC stands for Big, Boring and Complacent," the Sun article said. "BBC TV and radio should be told to broadcast adverts to pay for their programmes — and their bureaucracy.

"At least we might then get the programmes people want. Instead of the claptrap that the public school and Oxbridge BBC types think they should make as a 'public service'."

There was no mention of the link between the Sun and BSkyB in the article, which was not linked to any news story.

The BBC said that it was nonplussed by the attack. "I would put it down to there being a new editor," one senior BBC source said.

The new Sun editor, David Yelland, has already hit the headlines when he portrayed the Prime Minister as "the most dangerous man in Britain".

BSkyB dismissed any link between the leader and BSkyB's interests. "We are separate companies and we had no forewarning that this was happening," one executive said.

Leader comment, page 11

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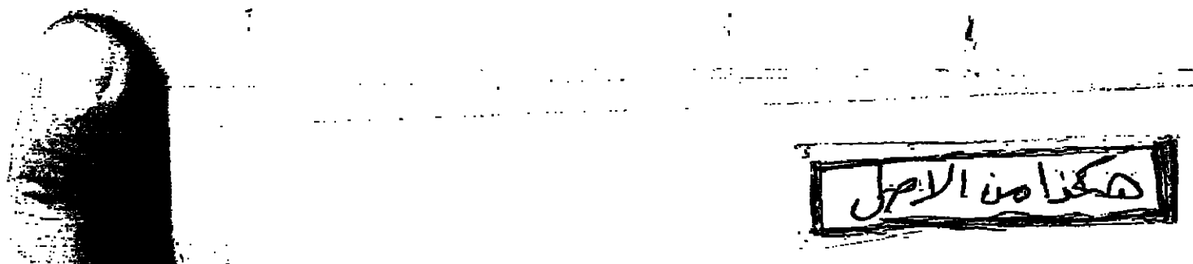
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هكذا من الاصل

Death of a half-Cherokee cowboy sparing with the gun

Mark Tran in New York

AMERICA is mourning the death yesterday of Roy Rogers, its singing cowboy who epitomised decency and wholesomeness in a bygone era. He died, aged 86, at his Apple Valley home near Los Angeles.

President Bill Clinton paid tribute, saying Rogers' lengthy career reflected true American values. "I really appreciate what he stood for: the movies he made and the kind of values they embodied.

"Today there will be a lot of sad and grateful Americans, especially of my generation, because of his career."

Rogers kept up his musical career in recent years, releasing an album of old and new songs. Tribute, in 1991. It featured the country superstar Clint Black as a guest singer on one track, Hold on Partner.

Black said afterwards: "I respect him immensely. He's just a great human being, very devoted to his family, and he has great appreciation and respect for his fans."

A far cry from the macho John Wayne and Clint Eastwood's cold-blooded Man with No Name, Rogers found fame and fortune during the 1940s and 1950s with his guitar as much as his six-gun.

In a shoot-out he would knock the gun out of the villain's hand rather than drill him full of holes, an action which would have seemed unbelievably quaint in later Westerns.

Rogers criticised the rougher, bloodier Westerns that followed.

"When I was a boy, our parents taught us that hitting below the belt was a cowardly thing," he once said. "I don't believe this kind of thing is 'entertainment', no matter how you look at it."

Rogers represented the "domestication of the notion of the cowboy", said Lee Zimmerman, professor of English at Hofstra University, New York.

"He has a nice outfit, nice spurs and, famously, has a wife — unlike your regular cowboy leading cattle in the middle of nowhere and hanging out in saloons. Rogers represents the flip side of the post-war cowboy — domestication — while John Wayne shows us the more belligerent side."

Rogers' first leading role was a singing cowpoke turned congressman in Under Western Stars, a combination of Davy Crockett and Mr Smith Goes to Washington, promoting the myth of the indepedent American Westerner.

He was an instant hit, soon nicknamed King of the Cowboys. For 12 years — 1943 to 1954 — Rogers was the number one Western star at the box office.

He was a singing cowbow in virtually all his films, an exception being Dark Command, in which he played a trigger-happy man trying to settle whether Kansas should be a slave state.

In 1944 Rogers met Dale Evans in The Cowboy and the Senorita. They married and went on to make more than 20 films together, and a sucessful transition to television.

From 1951 to 1967 they starred in the Roy Rogers Show, Rogers riding his horse Trigger and Evans her Buttermilk. Each week Rogers would save the West from some evil character and Evans would sing Happy Trails to You, the song she wrote for the show.

Rogers' character was stalwart and homespun, and he never really kissed the girl, so as not to alienate his legions of young male fans, though he sometimes kissed his horse.

He never misepresented Native American characters either. Although it was never publicised, his father was a full-blooded Cherokee.

The film critic Leonard Martin said: "He came from nothing. He earned everything he ever had and remained a modest, simple man. He portrayed himself as a good, honest man and that's what he was."

Obituary, page 12



'Nice outfit, nice spurs, and a wife.' A studio portrait of Roy Rogers, domesticated cowboy ARCHIVE PHOTOS

When I was a boy, our parents taught us that hitting below the belt was a cowardly thing. I don't believe this kind of thing is 'entertainment', no matter how you look at it

Roy Rogers

He came from nothing. He earned everything he ever had and remained a modest, simple man. He portrayed himself as a good, honest man and that's what he was

Film critic Leonard Maltin



A Sikh policeman stands guard in New Delhi, where 2,000 Sikh nationalists protested against nuclear weapons yesterday PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN McCONNICO

India 'may sign nuclear treaty'

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi and Ian Black in London

INDIA is signalling a new readiness to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but is demanding an end to sanctions and embargos on the transfer of nuclear technology.

The indication from senior government officials that New Delhi would even countenance signing the treaty — which it accuses of enshrining "nuclear apartheid" — is the first positive message since May, when its five nuclear tests shocked the world.

The signal comes on the eve of a meeting between the United States deputy secretary of state, Strobe Talbott, and a senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Jaswant Singh. The BJP is the leader of India's Hindu nationalist ruling coalition, and Mr Singh is a confidant of the prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

It also follows indications from Pakistan that it might sign the treaty without waiting for India, an apparent response to the sanctions imposed on Islamabad after its six tit-for-tat tests.

Pakistan has reportedly weaponised its bomb, to be delivered by long-range missile. India has not, though one senior source suggested it was close to doing so.

The world's five official nuclear weapons states — the US, Russia, China, France and Britain — had hoped to stop any such move by either country after the tests. But there were hopes last night that the international pressure was starting to work.

Yet while New Delhi appears prepared to abandon its implacable opposition to the treaty, it believes it can command a high price for its assent, pleading that it needs to convince a population that largely favours nuclear bombs.

"We have to turn around the consensus ... against the CTBT in favour of the CTBT," a senior official said. "We have to show there are some benefits to signing."

India has been reluctant to acknowledge the impact of sanctions. But businessmen and foreign investors have been vocal about their fears, and the Bombay stock exchange and the rupee have been badly hit.

The willingness to discuss the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty does not extend to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which New Delhi argues was made obsolete by its five test blasts.

However, officials said New Delhi would be willing to turn its moratorium on nuclear tests into a binding agreement, and to guarantee not to transfer technology.

Some experts argue that President Bill Clinton has staked so much of his reputation on arms control treaties that Washington no longer enjoys much leverage over New Delhi. Aside from the lifting of the sanctions, India is thought likely to try to extract an easing of a ban on the transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

"India for the last 25 years has been treated as a rogue state as far as technology is concerned, although it is China that is doing the proliferating," Jasjit Singh, director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, said.

Pressure on both countries will continue at a meeting in London this week of officials from the Group of Eight leading industrial countries, and states such as South Africa and Brazil which have renounced nuclear weapons. But diplomats in New Delhi say India's beleaguered government has turned inward and is placating its coalition partners to stay in power.

Rand plunges over new banking chief

David Beresford reports on the row over the appointment of Tito Mboweni, the first black to head South Africa's central bank

A SOUTH African newspaper ran a competition at the weekend inviting readers to suggest the best way to take a foreign holiday without exceeding a tight budget of 100 rand — now less than £9 a day. In cheery encouragement it offered: "How the celebs would whoop it up."

Rugby captain Gary Teichman, speaking on the eve of his departure to Australasia to lead the Springboks in the Tri-nations series, suggested holidaying in neighbouring Zimbabwe, where Robert Mugabe has made a comprehensive hash of the economy.

Television talk-show host Felicia Mabuza-Suttle — the local counterpart to Oprah Winfrey — plumped for Atlanta, "because everyone wants to go to an Olympic city", recommending that tourists try the Salvation Army for accommodation.

Readers were having to revise their holiday suggestions yesterday as the rand crashed a further 7 per cent on the news that the labour minister, Tito Mboweni, is to be the first black to head the country's reserve bank.

The appointment took the currency to 11.6 against the pound — a fall of 33 per cent since the end of May.

The business establishment rallied behind the South African government yesterday, "welcoming" its choice of governor, but their support was less than convincing. Opposition parties were strongly critical, protesting that the appointment of an African National Congress politician prejudiced the independence of the central bank.

The ANC reacted furiously yesterday, accusing them of racism — of needing to "create the false notion that blacks are incapable of running the country or the economy".

The government claims that the appointment of Mr Mboweni follows a lengthy consultation exercise with, among others, the governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, and the chairman of the United States Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan.

Although the departure of Chris Stals — the world's longest-serving head of a central bank — was no surprise, and considered by many to be long overdue, the choice of Mr Mboweni to succeed him was, on the face of it, baffling.

The independence of the reserve bank from political influence has been an article of faith to which the ANC has subscribed. Enabling legislation specifies that the appointment must go to someone of "tested banking experience". Mr Mboweni has none.

The intention is to give him a crash course in banking between the time he stands down from cabinet, on July 18, and takes over the reserve bank when Mr Stals formally retires in August next year.

There is some suspicion that the decision reflects a strategy by Nelson Mandela's heir as president, Thabo Mbeki, to extend political control to all sectors of government. Mr Mbeki announced



Mboweni: Threat to bank's independence, say critics

the appointment in the absence of Mr Mandela — aged 80 years this month and on the verge of retirement — who is visiting the Caribbean.

Mr Mbeki confirmed his commitment to economic rectitude last week when he forced the South African Communist Party and the Congress of South African Trade Unions to back off in their criticism of the government's economic policy.

But analysts are attributing the collapse of the rand in part to a fear among investors that, with debilitating interest rates, high unemployment and the prospect of a general election next year, Mr Mbeki will be forced into more populist economic measures with the connivance of the new man at the bank.

Lack of experience worries critics

THE South African government was reassuring local journalists at the weekend that the startling appointment of Tito Mboweni to head the reserve bank had been long planned — a year, by one account, *writes our correspondent in Johannesburg.*

If this was the case, it seemed to have omitted to tell the outgoing governor, Chris Stals. Two weeks ago he said in an interview that his successor would need two qualifications; he or she "must be someone with real banking experience" and able to command the loyalty of staff. If the staff enthuse at Mr Mboweni's appointment it will not be because of his banking experience, which is non-existent.

But he cannot be criticised for lack of ability. A gradnate of the University of East Anglia, with a master's degree in development economics, Mr Mboweni, aged 39, is seen as one of the most capable members of South Africa's cabinet.

Under his direction the African National Congress government has churned out a slew of labour legislation — most of it, however, seen as generous to a fault to the unions. He has been heavily dependent on left-wing advisers at the labour ministry, and in the exile years was reportedly a member of the South African Communist Party.

But he appears to accept South Africa's commitment to an open economy, saying at the weekend that trying to shield an economy from the effects of globalisation was like "trying to create laws to limit the Internet".

Characterised by the local Financial Mail as "supremely self-assured, opinionated, affable, cutting and easily bored", he has seemingly lost interest in the labour portfolio.

Considered an ambitious politician, he had been seen as capable of succeeding Thabo Mbeki in the presidency. But after the new appointment, he says he has no further political ambitions and envisages a subsequent career in academia.

Florida fire evacuees face bitter return

Some homes have been razed, others have been looted while the owners sought shelter, reports **Ed Vulliamy** from Flagler county

A CHEER went up from among the cereal packets and plastic cups at Lake Mary High School, shelter to 300 people for the past four days: "The mandatory evacuation is lifted. You can go home."

The all-clear was sounded on television by Rick Gage, head of the emergency strike force in Flagler County, Florida, from which 40,000 people were ordered to evacuate last week as fire surged across the parched land.

More than 2,000 fires have scorched 474,000 acres in dought-stricken Florida since May, damaging or destroying more than 300 buildings. More than 70,000 people throughout the state were evacuated.

Despite Mr Gage's pleas to "take it easy", within seconds people were scrambling for their teddy bears, mementoes and dirty clothes, stuffing them into bags and heading for their cars. "If you can wait until tomorrow, that would be better," Mr Gage went on, but engines were revving and the great homecoming was about to begin.

"It's just great", John Soper said. "But we don't know what's waiting for us back there; we don't know if our homes are standing or not."

For Ladonna Leslie and her five-month-old baby, Lake Mary was the third shelter since Thursday. She had been told there was "at least smoke damage" to her home, possibly worse. "I just want to get right back and find out the worst".

Flagler was the area worst hit by fire and the evacuation was the biggest. The return will be the most chaotic. Thirty thousand people left the county in four hours on Friday, but it will take much longer to get them back.

Mr Gage assured residents: "Ninety-seven per cent of the properties in your area have received little or no damage." But he added: "The area is still at extreme risk of fire. Any lightning strike could start a major fire. I am asking people to go straight back home, and for all sightseers to just stay away."

There will be a mandatory curfew from dawn to dusk, not least because of an ugly flipside to a week of heroism and survival — arson and looting. The district attorney, John Tanner, said yesterday: "We know that some those fires you have been watching on your televisions have been deliberately set."

> 'I'm looking at things that have been familiar to me for years, and I don't recognise them now'

Others were started by people who defied the ban on Fourth of July fireworks on Saturday night. There have been two arrests for looting.

Mr Tanner said: "I want to say to those of you who try to take advantage of this catastrophe: you are so out of line and you'd better remember that any jury hearing your case will have been through this, so you'd better expect what's coming to you."

He added: "This is an insult to the firefighters and our community, and I urge you to be vigilant, to report any suspicious act you see."

In Flagler county Terri Wolf of Animal Protection spoke yesterday of an aspect of the disaster that has been overlooked: animals, domestic and wild.

The fires have created an environmental catastrophe on a scale yet to be reckoned with. Across the stricken areas, deer wander aimlessly, raccoon cadavers lie incinerated in the ashes, rattlesnakes take cover on beaches.

There has been an exodus of pets and farm animals. Some went with their owners to the few shelters willing to take them and others have been rescued, but many have perished.

Ms Wolf said her teams had evacuated more than 500 horses, pigs and cows to centres around central Florida. "But there will be victims — dogs chained to trees, strays, some of them will have died. When you return home, you will likely see disorientated wildlife over the next few days. If you do, call us and we'll be bringing them in."

Elsewhere in central Florida, the homecoming was under way on Sunday night, in some cases a bitter one. In Brevard county, many residents returned to the town of Mims to find their houses ruined or burnt to the ground.

One woman, whose home was almost destroyed, broke down in tears: "We had just paid for it last Fall. Now we'll have to start all over."

Frank Martin, the deputy sherrif, toured the town of Scottsmoor, whose plight has been overshadowed by the scale of the disaster in Flagler county, for the first time on Sunday night.

Surveying a gas station and a row of houses gutted by fire, he said: "I didn't expect the devastation to be as bad as it is. I'm looking at things that have been familiar to me for years, and I don't recognise them now."

Clinton visit to boost Yeltsin

James Meek in Moscow and Mark Tran in New York

BILL CLINTON is to visit Boris Yeltsin in Moscow in September, the Russian government announced yesterday — an important gesture of support to the troubled Russian president.

Mr Clinton, who had said he would not go to Moscow until the Russian parliament had ratified the Start-II nuclear disarmament treaty, is defying a congressional faction hostile to Russia. It is a sign that the White House wants to end speculation that China has replaced Russia as its favourite post-Marxist state.

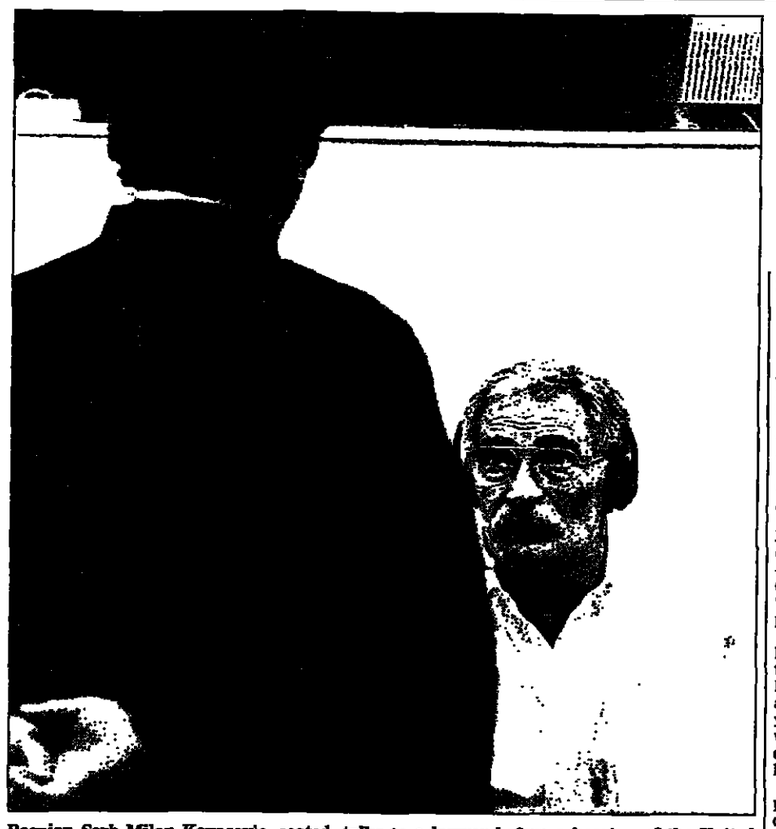
There may be a more important reason: to see at first hand the extent of Russia's financial crisis, and to find out whether Mr Yeltsin is capable, physically, politically and constitutionally, of leading his country into the 21st century.

The US and Russian constitutions both limit elected presidents to two terms in office. But while Mr Clinton knows he must step down in 2000, Mr Yeltsin's aides are seeking a legal loophole to give him at least the chance of a third term. The Russian constitutional court is due to make a ruling next week.

The announcement, with its implicit message to Russia's desperate financial community that it can count on US backing to stave off a rouble collapse, was opportune, coinciding with fresh symptoms of economic malaise in Moscow and beyond.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development said it had sold its 9.6 per cent stake in the crumbling Russian commercial bank Tokobank, and the interest rate Russia has to pay to borrow money to keep the country running rose to 90 per cent, nine times the inflation rate.

Serb goes on trial in first Bosnia war genocide case



Bosnian Serb Milan Kovacevic, seated, talks to a lawyer before a hearing of the United Nations tribunal yesterday. He was seized by the SAS last year PHOTOGRAPH: FRED ERNST

Richard Norton-Taylor

A BOSNIAN Serb accused of overseeing atrocities against Muslims and Croats yesterday became the first person to stand trial for genocide during Bosnia's 1992-95 war in which more than 250,000 people died.

Milan Kovacevic is charged with genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including rape, torture, and killings in three notorious camps in north-west Bosnia — Keraterm, Trnopolje and Omarska, where orchestrated "ethnic-cleansing" was first publicised in the Guardian.

A former deputy mayor of Prijedor, and later director of the municipal medical centre, Mr Kovacevic was seized by an SAS snatch-squad last year, in an operation in which Simo Drljaca, Prijedor's former police chief, was killed while resisting arrest.

Mr Kovacevic, aged 57, pleaded not guilty to the 15 charges against him. If convicted, he faces a maximum life sentence.

The indictments say the three camps were operated in a way designed to destroy the Bosnian Muslim and Croat peoples as national, ethnic or religious groups, by subjecting detainees to a regime intended to kill them.

Sitting in the dock at the Hague war crimes court, Mr Kovacevic heard the prosecutor, Brenda Hollis, describe how camp guards "were free to kill, torture and rape" with no intervention from superiors.

"In Omarska, people saw corpses every day ... killings were routine in Keraterm," she said. There were so many dead bodies at Omarska that large trucks were needed to remove them from the camp, she said.

She said Mr Kovacevic was among a group of officials who engineered a violent campaign to expel Bosnian Muslims and Croats from Prijedor between April and December 1992. He was the vice-president of the "crisis staff" which ordered attacks on non-Serb villages, the seizure and detention of Bosnian Muslims and Croats, and the establishment of prison camps, she said.

According to the prosecution, the atrocities began with heavy artillery bombardments of non-Serb villages. Some survivors were executed, while many others were taken to the camps, where hundreds were tortured and killed.

Mr Kovacevic "acted with intent to commit genocide", Ms Hollis said. "Entire villages and hamlets were cleansed of non-Serbs."

The defence lawyer, Dusan Vucicevic, argued that as a civilian Mr Kovacevic was not responsible for acts committed by the police and military. "In almost each and every one of the allegations, there is a reasonable explanation. These facts negate [that] ... my client had any responsibility," Mr Vucicevic said.

Comparing the Prijedor camps with those set up by the Nazis during the second world war, he said: "The charge of genocide is improper."

Mr Kovacevic is one of 27 detainees at the court's detention centre. The tribunal has indicted the former Bosnian Serb leader, Radovan Karadzic, and his military commander, Ratko Mladic, for genocide. Both are still at large.



and abused captives in Serb camps (right) shocked the world early in the war. **Ed Vulliamy** returns to Omarska, where in August 1992 he was the first newspaper journalist to report from the camp, and talks to the doctors who were in control

Horror hidden beneath ice and lies

The Guardian alerted the world in August 1992 to the orchestrated ethnic-cleansing of Muslims and Croats by Serbs at the Omarska concentration camp, during the Bosnia war

News in brief

Death squad officer breaks his silence

A FORMER policeman has broken his 20-year silence on the disappearance of two French nuns during Argentina's "dirty war", saying their bodies were put in a sealed drum and dumped in a river. Using the alias Mario Gómez, he told a reporter from Perfil newspaper that he was a senior officer in a federal police "task group" — the official euphemism for the death squads — during the 1976-83 military dictatorship.

The nuns, Leonie Duquet and Alice Domon, who disappeared in 1977, are among thousands of people tortured in clandestine centres. Human rights groups estimate that 30,000 died.

Their kidnapping has been blamed on a former navy captain, Alfredo Astiz, dubbed the "Blond Angel", a notorious death squad officer who was sentenced in absentia by French courts to life in prison. Mr Gómez said the nuns' disappearance was arranged by another navy officer, Jorge "Tigre" Acosta, but he did not say how they were killed. — *Reuters, Buenos Aires.*

Greek fires under control

FIREFIGHTERS yesterday extinguished most of the more than 180 brush and forest fires that had been raging throughout Greece since Saturday. More than two people died and dozens of houses were destroyed.

Investigators are checking whether some of the fires were deliberately started, after more than two-thirds of the blazes began within an hour of each other on Saturday. Hot, dry winds and temperatures above 38C helped spread the flames, which consumed thousands of acres of woods and grassland. In the past, fires have been set by people hoping to evade legislation forbidding building in forest areas. — *AP, Athens.*

Lull in violence for Egypt

AN ISLAMIST lawyer who has defended members of al-Gama'a al-Islamiya, Egypt's largest Muslim militant group, was quoted yesterday as saying the group was observing an undeclared ceasefire. Montasser al-Zayyat told the Arabic-language newspaper Al-Hayat, based in London, that there had been a lull in violence since a statement issued by Gama'a leaders in exile in late January.

The statement said Gama'a was considering accepting a ceasefire call made by six Gama'a leaders jailed in Egypt. Gama'a, which is trying to turn Egypt into a purist Islamic state, claimed responsibility for the massacre of 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians in Luxor in November, the bloodiest attack in its six-year armed struggle. — *Reuters, Cairo.*

Presidents defy UN embargo

THE presidents of Chad and Niger defied a United Nations air embargo by flying into Libya yesterday for special prayers to be led by Muammar Gadafy to celebrate the Prophet Mohammed's birthday.

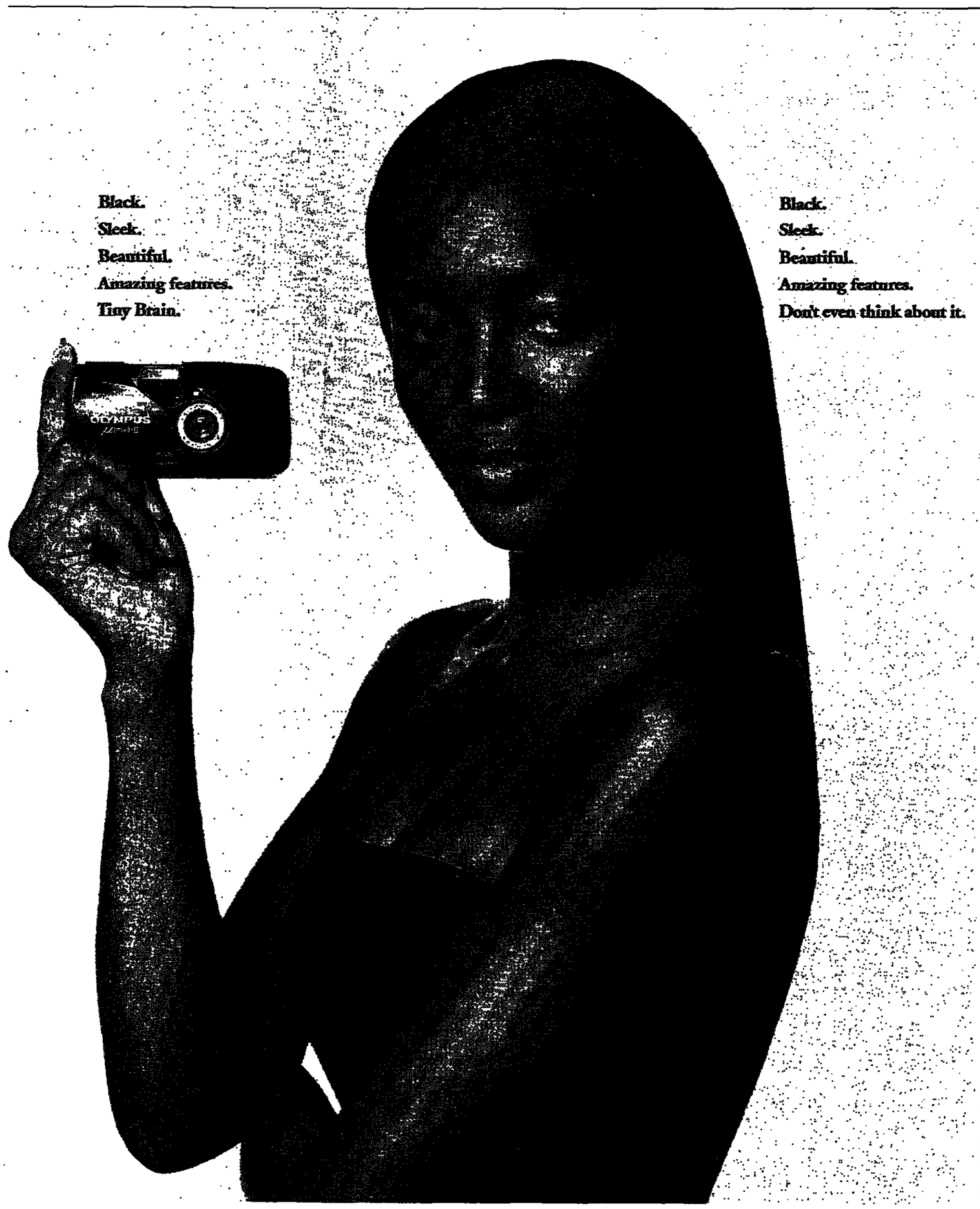
Idriss Deby of Chad and Ibrahim Bare Mainassara of Niger will be joining thousands of representatives of Muslim organisations in the prayers in the northern seaside town of Al-Bayda, 865 miles east of the capital Tripoli.

State television said four other presidents — Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone, Yahya Jammeh of Gambia and Abdou Diouf of Senegal — were also in Libya. However, they came by road. — *AP, Al-Bayda.*

Disney strikers fight on

EURO DISNEY said it had reached an agreement with 15 striking technicians yesterday, leaving 40 performers in the parade of Disney characters locked in a pay dispute at the Paris theme park.

The company denies claims by the performers that 200 of the 13,000 staff are on strike. The performers are opposed to the company's condition that each must audition to receive the status of amusement park artist. — *AP, Paris.*



Exactly what part of the gorgeous Ms Campbell's body holds the most allure for people? Her legs? Her eyes? Her lips? Her breasts? Perhaps her brain? No, it's unquestionably her right hand. In which can be seen the Olympus Mju II.

In fact, Naomi herself fell so much in love with the Mju II (lucky camera, we say) that for a whole year it became her constant and devilishly attractive companion as she travelled the globe modelling, meeting the great and the good and generally making the world a more beautiful place.

The photographs she took during this time can soon be seen in a forthcoming exhibition. These surprising, often funny and sometimes moving pictures naturally owe a lot to Naomi's eye. In addition, they owe a lot to the technology that helped make the Mju II the European compact camera of the year '98.

Unlike many comparable compacts, it has a far superior 35mm F2.8 lens. It also has the all important anti-red-eye flash, a unique weatherproof construction and it's as small as its £99 price tag. Finally, as you'd expect, it comes complete with auto load, auto rewind, auto exposure and auto focus.

So it is every bit as simple as another rather famous black, sleek, beautiful model.

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Protesting immigrants outside the prime minister's office in Jerusalem yesterday hold photographs of relatives in Ethiopia PHOTOGRAPH: BRYAN McBURNEY

Clans given limited rights by court but face land curb

Aboriginals win title to the sea

Christopher Zinn in Sydney

AUSTRALIAN Aborigines were granted native title rights yesterday to the sea surrounding their traditional lands.

In a historic ruling, the federal court in Darwin found that five aboriginal clans had a communal claim to the waters and seabed around Croker Island, off the Arnhem Land coast in the Northern Territory.

The decision on one of the 140 claims affecting Australian waters came as the federal parliament in Canberra took steps to restrict aboriginal title to outback pastoral and mining leases.

Justice Howard Olney granted the clans limited right to the seas, meaning that they have no power to exclude others, such as anglers and commercial fishing and mining operations, from the area.

He said: "The native title rights and interests do not confer possession, occupation, use and enjoyment of the sea and seabed within the claimed area to the exclusion of all others."

The clans hailed the decision as a historic victory, and said they would consider appealing to the high court for full and exclusive access to the area.

Mary Yarmirr, who brought the claim on behalf of the Mandilarri-Ildugji clan, said the case showed that the sea was as sacred to indigenous people as the land.

"We believe, and it is part of our law and culture, that the land and the sea are one. We have the same spiritual affiliation for the sea and the land."

The Croker Island case comes on top of the confusion caused by multiple and sometimes overlapping aboriginal bids for leasehold land in the Australian outback, which the prime minister, John Howard, is seeking to contain with his so-called Wik bill.

As the senate sat for an extra week to pass the measure, the government denied that yesterday's ruling would have any impact on the progress of its bill.

The Labour Party opposition described the senate's deliberations, covering 400 pages of amendments to Mr Howard's Native Title Act, as a day of national shame which appeased racists and racism.

Some 300 protesters gathered outside Parliament House and spelled out the word "shame" with a sea of hands.

Senator Nick Bolkus said the legislation would be unworkable and would face endless legal challenges.

"The forces unleashed in our community, often given refuge and encouragement by a prime minister who panders to them, will not be defeated by today's taking away of the rights of indigenous Australians."

The chairman of the aboriginal body Atsic, Gatjil Djerrkura, said the passage of the bill, which has involved many political deals, was a significant loss for his peoples.

"[It] will limit the future of aboriginal people to protect their property rights, which underpin their culture and social and economic well-being."

Israel severs bloodline for Ethiopians

Julian Borger in Jerusalem on the families torn apart by the ending of mass airlifts

THE crowd of Ethiopian immigrants jostling with police outside the Israeli prime minister's office yesterday were demanding new answers to some old questions. "Who is a Jew?" and "Are all Jews equal?", they wanted to know. Judging by the ugly mood, they were still waiting for the reply.

The sour taste of racial division has returned to Israeli domestic politics. After recent measures designed to close the door on immigration from Ethiopia, the government stands accused of abandoning tens of thousands of African Jews who trace their descent to the biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

Anger has been growing since June 26, when formal ceremonies were held to mark what the government hailed as the "final planeload" of Ethiopians, bringing to an end 12 years of dramatic airlifts that provided Israel with more than 60,000 new citizens.

At the same time, the government closed an aid camp in Addis Ababa for Ethiopians claiming Jewish descent.



The new immigration measures have cut families in two. Many of yesterday's 2,000 protesters had brought photographs of relatives whose lives they said were now in danger. A young recent immigrant, Ayanaw Tadessa, held aloft a fad-d snapshot of an old man with watery eyes and an expression of anxious dignity.

"My grandfather died in Addis last week because he was left without shelter or food," he said. He had written an open letter in Hebrew and English on behalf of cousins and uncles still in the Ethiopian capital.

"We are all of us Ethiopian Jews," the letter said. "We are without food or help. So please bring us out as soon as possible, we ask you. In a few days. We beg you in the name of God, the God of Israel."

A dozen other new immigrants pushed forward their own family pictures, as if the merest contact with a foreigner might bring their missing relatives a tiny scrap of hope.

Most of the new immigrants are Falashmura — Christians whose forefathers converted from Judaism and who were therefore not eligible to immigrate under Israel's "law of return", which explicitly rules out converts to other religions.

However, because of the large numbers of Falashmura who gathered in Addis Ababa to claim their Jewish heritage after the two mass airlifts of Ethiopian Jews in 1986 and 1991, an exception was made on humanitarian grounds. Up to 10,000 Falashmura were granted Israeli citizenship. But the flow from the northern Ethiopian countryside kept coming.

"It showed that no good turn goes unpunished," said Ami Bergman, of the American Jewish joint distribution committee, which helped run the Addis Ababa camp.

"Thousands were coming and there was no real way of telling who was who. We decided it was better for them to stay in their villages rather than come to the camp, with all the dangers of life in the city, and become dependent on us."

In June last year the Israeli government declared it would empty the camp and thereafter strictly implement the law of return, which stipulates that a new immigrant to Israel must prove descent from at least one Jewish grandparent.

Abshalom Elitzur, a philosophy lecturer and human rights campaigner, claimed that Ethiopians were being subjected to far more rigorous tests than new Russian immigrants, up to 250,000 of whom are thought to be Christians.

"There are more Russian Christians in Israel than all the Ethiopian Jews. I'm afraid it boils down to one word: racism. For years we thought we were exempt from it. Now, we have to face it," Mr Elitzur said.

On a visit last month to the Gondar region in north-west Ethiopia, he said he had heard testimony of sectarian attacks by Christian neighbours against the Falashmura and a residual population of practising Jews.

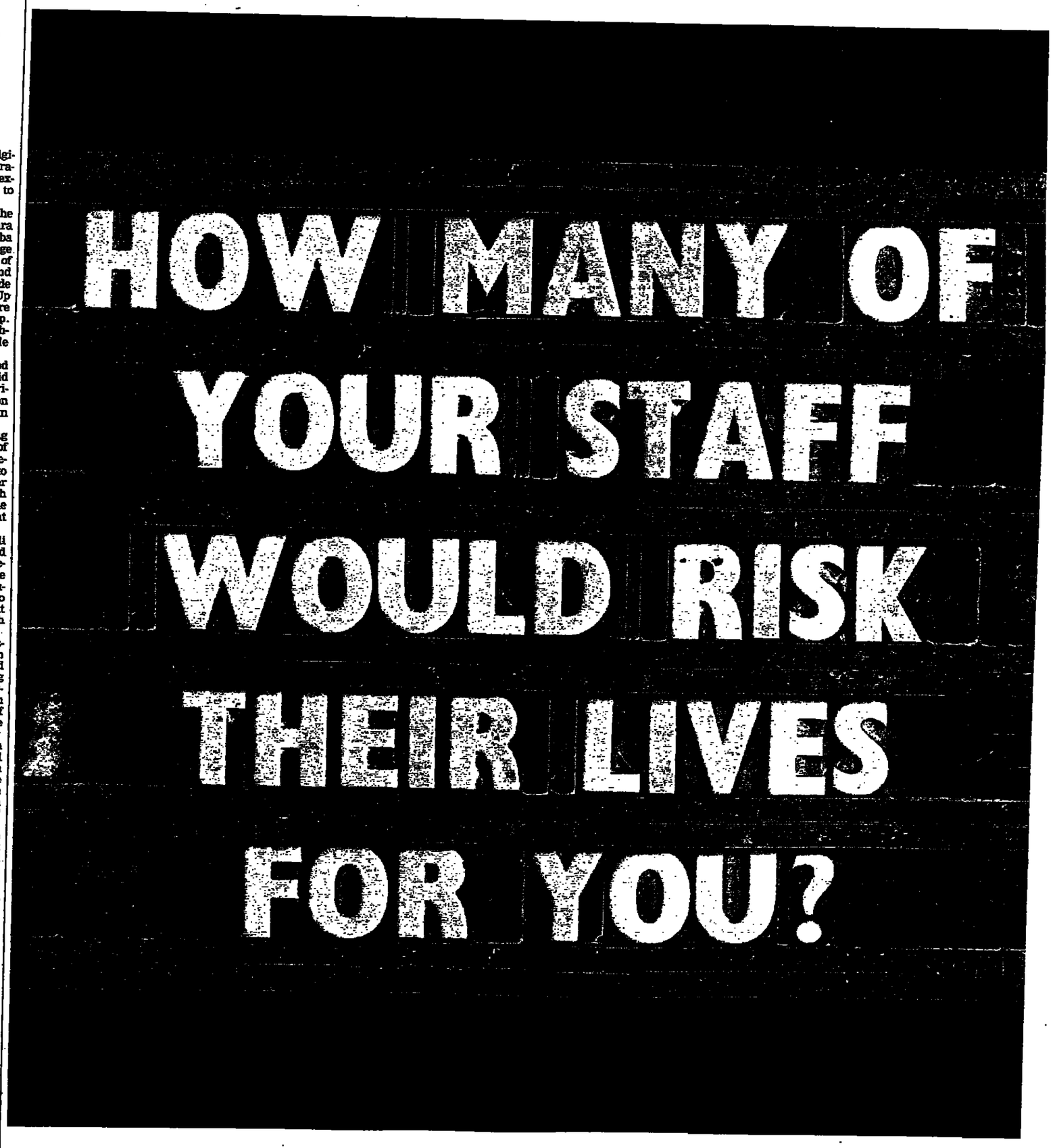
"We recorded some cases of murder. In one case a four-year-old girl was burned to death in her hut, about three months ago in Gondar," he said. "This trend is increasing because there is growing poverty and general unrest, and rumours that Israel will get these people out means that their neighbours start eyeing their land property and pressurising them to go."

The Israeli government and the main aid agencies say they have heard no direct evidence of "pogroms" against Ethiopian Jews and deny the allegations of racism.

"There is only one standard applied to all, and that standard is the law of return," said Mike Rosenberg, an official at the Jewish Agency, responsible for encouraging the immigration of the diaspora.

The interior ministry is due to send a consular official to Gondar in search of practising Jews. Once their identity has been confirmed they will fly to Israel on the weekly scheduled El-Al flight.

There will be no more airlifts, the government says, and therefore no imminent respite for the grief-stricken protesters nursing their family portraits. And to the question scrawled on a placard yesterday: "Who is responsible for our family's blood?" — no clear answer.



It would be nice to think the question will never arise, but you need only look at recent events to see how close we can be, at any time, to a national emergency when our armed forces, including the reservists who work for you, are deployed.

Our forces may have reduced in size, but their commitments have not. That's why volunteers are increasingly important to us and why proper training is so crucial. In civilian life it makes them better employees; better motivated, more responsible and quicker to act on their own initiative. In an emergency this could make the difference between life and death. So, next time any of your volunteers need time off for military training, we hope you'll understand and support their commitment. After all, they are prepared to risk their lives for you and your country.

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Comment

Diary

Matthew Norman

THE news of Dolly Draper shocks me to the point of paralysis, and I take to *my* bed with a fit of the vapours. That Dolly, the high-minded ideologue known to Diary readers as "New Labour's very own Arthur Daley", has been flogging government secrets . . . that Dolly, the man of honour who once went to ground owing Faber & Faber £1,000 on a book deal, is unmasked as a mercenary who speaks of "stuffing my bank account at £250 an hour" . . . that Dolly, the reticent soul who once told veteran Glasgow MP Jimmy Wray: "I'm the man who makes the policy", would have bragged about his access to the levers of power . . . well, who could possibly have seen it coming? Now poor Dolly's been suspended by his lobbying firm, and sacked by Rizla Rosie Boycott from his Express column. Don't you worry, Dolly, there's always a berth for you here. Just give us the word, and a regular slot will be yours. The money's not great, but it's cash . . . and no need to put it through the till, my son, know what I mean?

SPEAKING of Rizla Rosie, in sacking Dolly she explained that a columnist must be "independent". How true this is, how very, very true. Rizla's a very independent editor herself, of course, and has been for weeks . . . ever since withdrawing Paul Routledge's job offer on instruction from New Labour High Command. For the third and final time, Rosie, in the name of all that is good and wise, will you please, please, please, please take more tobacco with it?

FOR all the unintentional drollery of her statement, Rosie may have a point. Sticklers for the journalistic niceties (people like Professor Donald Trelford of Sheffield University) may mildly question Dolly's habit of submitting his copy to Mandy Mandelson for approval before sending it to the paper. Well, let the purists think what they will. The Diary approves of this tactic, and recently attempted, you will recall, to have the column vetted each day by Downing Street in the hope of being steered on-message. Presumably because he was too busy reading so many other stories, Alastair Campbell could not find the time. But now that we know that Mandy has no objections in principle, we'll be faxing him each evening at the Cabinet Office for any emendations he might care to make.

MEANWHILE, rumours about Mr Mandelson's reward in the forthcoming reshuffle continue to circulate. Some believe that he will ***** ******* ******* ******** ********* *****, while others think it more likely that he will get the ******** ministry. *(Put something in here about Cook being fatally weakened, and the need for a Foreign Secretary more tuned in to the Prime Minister's thinking" — PM)* Whatever the future may bring, however, Mr Mandelson will be pleased to continue to serve his leader loyally, and as best as his modest talents allow. *(Try not to overdo the humility, or they might read it as irony — PM).*

CONGRATULATIONS to the Sun for getting the first interview with Anthea Turner since her romantic split from Grant Bovey, the video-maker. The paper labels its scoop with the words "World Exclusive", and rightly so. "You wouldn't believe what a job it was signing her up," says a source at the paper. "Every paper in the world was after her. We had to fight off bids from Mauritius, Iceland, Venezuela, the Cayman Islands and Papua New Guinea, and at the last minute we nearly got scooped by the biggest daily tabloid. It was murder."

WITH Argentina's elimination from the World Cup, the Diary wins its bet with Independent editor Simon Kelner. Although there appears to be one tiny point of dispute, we hope that Simon's debt can be discharged amicably, and without anybody accusing anybody else of being well out of order.



New Labour has lived by the image. Now they could begin to die by it

Hugo Young



THE Blair Government created, as its distinctive political signature, the culture of perception. The way we thought Labour looked defined the way New Labour was and is. Now this culture, and the new political class that massaged it into existence, is in danger of devouring its creator. There hasn't been a more exquisite political irony in recent times. Living by the image, the party could begin to die by it as well, whether through these people's invention of bloody hostility between the Prime Minister and the Chancellor, or the casual improprieties chronicled in Sunday's Observer. But irony is an understatement for what this *auto-da-fé* could yet do to the country.

The new political class, of advisers and consultants and bagmen with a line to New Labour's soul, are not what a political adviser used to be. Thirty years ago, when the species emerged into the holy enclave of government, the typical adviser was a professor who knew more about pensions or housing or education than the Civil Service. Such names as Balogh, Kaldor and Abel-Smith became a novel guarantee that the Wilson project, as it was not then known, would avoid being crushed by the orthodoxies of Whitehall. Then, Labour felt it needed experts in substance.

Today's political advisers are different. With some exceptions, they have little interest, and often no expertise, in policy. They're the minister's personal familiars, whose prime talent, if any, lies in explaining what the minister wants to get across: the guardians of access and the messengers of perception. Their role is no longer to defeat the Civil Service but to see off other ministers and their proxies, who belong, of course, to the same class as themselves. Their salary-bill is currently £3.6m, twice what the Major government spent on advisers in its last year. Every minister has to have one, sometimes two or three. As a class they've become a self-justifying, yet also mutually destructive, excrescence.

They personify the least acceptable part of what the Blair administration is about: its shallowness, its seduction by the wrong priorities, its fearfilled obsession with how the focus-groups see it. What they represent could charitably be dignified as the Government's interest in explanation and synthesis. More basely, this is a political class of new spinners, the instruments of the perception-culture Labour began inventing three years before it won the 1997 election.

There are other striking features of the culture. First, although these people work in the Civil Service, they are not civil servants. They enjoy the access and intimacy, as well as the confidentiality, of public officials, as full players in the Governmental world. But they haven't been trained in the same rules. A raft of career information officers was displaced to make way for some of them. Many seem exempt from the austerities of the average civil servant. They can go to parties, trumpet their contacts, sell their ministers, conniving and plotting with an abandon no proper civil servant would contemplate. While not corrupt, the new political class hangs loose from codes and ethics, freewheeling its way through the politico-business environment which is New Labour's proudest habitat.

Secondly, the absence of a policy dimension is more than a commentary on how times have changed. Most political advisers don't exist to push the ideological imperatives of their ministers, because these imperatives don't, for the most part, exist in rivalry to those of other factions in the Cabinet. Again there are exceptions. But the dominant culture has reduced systemic disagreement about policy to a minimum. The politics of New Labour is largely that of personality. Having neither policy input nor distinctive ideological commitment, the new class find their *raison d'être* in amplifying the politics of personality, on which subject they are ever more poisonous.

AT THE apex of their work is the common perception of relations between Tony Blair and Gordon Brown. This has become a masterpiece of misinformation, etched on the public mind as a self-fulfilling version of the truth. The two men are portrayed in a state of vicious, incorrigible disagreement, verging on mutual hatred fed by bitter personal rivalry, as a result of which the Cabinet stands in permanent danger of being destabilised from the top down. The image has been repeated often enough to become the paradigm of a great deal of political reporting. True or not, it has taken on a reality by which everything that happens has to be defined.

Yet it is, to an unusually spectacular degree, not true. Most of my professional life has been spent, among other things, watching Chancellors in different degrees of difficulty with their leaders. Wilson related abrasively to Jim Callaghan and was plotted against by Roy Jenkins. Callaghan and Denis Healey were yoked in miserable adversity. Mrs Thatcher's period was marked by deep policy rows with every Chancellor she had, and then John Major experienced different kinds of disillusion with both Norman Lamont and Kenneth Clarke.

Mr Blair and Mr Brown, by contrast, live in a time of relative ease, and operate an economic policy which is directed towards a strategy they completely share. They meet or talk almost every day, and do not have a significant disagreement about anything that matters, including Europe, the subject where the conspiracy theorists are most prone to claim a serious divide. While not immune from the customary rivalry of political titans, they're bound tight together. So why is the opposite impression so persistently conveyed? Partly because the principals don't do enough to rein their minions in. But essentially because the minions, beginning with Mr Brown's, decided that perception-management in their master's interest is the only task they exist to perform, and rudery against Blairites the way they can best perform it.

The culture out of which this stuff grows can do a lot of harm. The ethics are loose, and the politics are personal. The ascendancy of perception produces, at its zenith, a perception that is seriously mistaken. This is bad for Mr Blair, who puzzles how he can suppress what his own minions, as a counter to the Chancellor's, sometimes privately say to people like me. But it's a self-indulgent deformity that's bad for the country as well. After all, we've elected these people for a number of years, and need more than the politics of perception, especially when perception's most shining trophy is a lie.

Stone age women

Ros Coward



LAST week Polly Toynbee dismissed Fay Weldon's latest outburst as attention seeking by "apostasy". The choice of words was revealing. Apostasy is the quitting of a religious order or the renunciation of religious vows without dispensation, and feminists usually fall over themselves to deny any central faith. But this outburst makes it clear that for one group at least — and a rather powerful group at that — feminist beliefs are written in stone.

Toynbee has been reading out a lot from her tablet recently. This has been prompted by the fact that Weldon's claims about men now suffering discrimination received so much more attention than the meeting of European women ministers. The media, she says, regards feminist struggles as boring because they are no longer about middle class career women: "the cause of women is now a class issue — and class politics are out of fashion". But feminists must continue to repeat their mantra: on average women still earn 20 per cent less than men, they still bear the main domestic responsibilities, and until they can be equal breadwinners, they will always be vulnerable.

I must then be part of the media conspiracy, for I, too, find this reiteration of feminist fundamentals boring. This is not because the subject of women's situation bores me. Far from it. It's more because the form and content of these views is so utterly unchanged from the seventies. When Toynbee says: "Corporate women, women in suits, women in wigs, women in senior police uniforms, ministers, prime ministers, yes powerful women are everywhere you look but even in those airy heights the image lies", I hear the seventies complaint of tokenism. This is nonsense. The emergence of such powerful women can't be easily dismissed. They are a symptom of the profound changes which have affected society over the last 30 years, many of them in response to feminism.

THIS weekend a survey revealed that "women in Britain continue to earn more money than at any other time in our history", with 50 women earning more than £1 million. Four years ago there were only 14 in this category. Women's changed economic status is reflected all across society. The number of women earning more than their partners has trebled from 1 in 15 in the early eighties to 1 in 5 by the mid nineties. Among childless couples it is normal for women to contribute half the income. In 1996 20 per cent of men have partners who are the main breadwinners, a figure that has tripled over the previous decade.

Of course, this does not mean women have full equality or that poorer women are not struggling. But it is a symptom of a radically changed picture. The old patriarchal equation meant that men's power in the home was reflected in their economic and social dominance outside. Women only ever had power by proxy through a powerful husband. When feminism burst on the scene in the late sixties and seventies, few could deny the injustices it described, the economic, legal and financial discrimination as well as oppression in the home. Feminism carried everything before it. But now the gender picture is more fractured and complex and a list of residual unfairnesses lacks compelling ethical urgency. Many women feel that what they are up against now is not yesterday's overt discrimination but more complex factors to do with how they chose to integrate work and family life.

Liam Hudson who delivered the Tanner Lectures at Yale University last year says that a preoccupation with this single question of fairness may be part of feminism's malady rather than its cure.

He says "Is it fair?" becomes maladaptive the moment it obscures its rivals: questions like "Is it true — and true to our experience?" and "Does it galvanise the imagination?" Feminism's old guard does the public and the media an injustice by claiming it is a lack of glamour which leads to boredom. There's nothing glamorous

> The number of women earning more than their men has trebled

about Stephen Lawrence's story or fox hunting, but people can feel passionately about situations when they transgress their ethical codes or resonate with their experiences. Regurgitated seventies feminism simply does not reach those parts.

Fay Weldon on the other hand occasionally does. In her wacky and inconsistent way she sometimes connects with what people are thinking. It's not that they believe rape doesn't matter or that powerful monstrous women are destroying men. It's just they recognise a more muddled situation where gender is not consistently making women victims or men villains.

After a week picking clean her bones, the verdict on Fay Weldon is that it's all down to her personality: as Carmen Callil put it, she's "clever, idiosyncratic and vaguely villainous". Her critics express huge irritation with this capriciousness. What they ought to feel is relief. Weldon often touches popular chords with her criticism of feminism and if she wasn't so maddeningly inconsistent and extreme, the old guard might really have to answer for their beliefs.

It was like the last days in the bunker – failure, cowardice and muddle are what I inherited at the Arts Council

An idiot? We'll see

Gerry Robinson

MAYBE you do have to be an idiot to take on the Arts Council at this time. Joan Bakewell didn't seem to want to "put her name forward" as she put it recently in the Guardian. Sensible woman. I look forward to when the council really starts to work for the arts in England (a novel idea) and everyone remembers just how much they agreed with the changes they're now protesting about.

Inevitably those who've lost their influence find sophisticated ways of explaining (very publicly of course) that it's not a personal thing at all (dear) but entirely for the sake of art.

The Arts Council has failed the arts in England for some considerable time and the fascinating thing is that, with the exception of a few of the "departed", everyone seems to agree on that. Muddle has been the order of the day. Muddle between policy and practice, between decision taking and advice, between lottery and grant-in-aid, between the Arts Council and the regions, between the Arts Council and government, between the Arts Council and the arts world and even between the Arts Council and the Arts Council.

On lottery funding, despite constant calls from an excellent but deeply frustrated lottery panel, a number of council members continued to argue for projects that could simply never be afforded. It was reminiscent of the last days in the bunker with people moving non-existent divisions about the map and arguing hotly over every move.

The result is that we inherit over £2.5 billion worth of projects chasing the £650 million available to us up to 2006. That will disappoint a lot of people who have put their hearts and souls into developing projects, often with the help of Arts Council money.

The new council will shortly agree a new framework for capital projects. Such projects need to be managed with the same long term perspective that exists for schools, hospitals or roads. We will draw up

> They were moving non-existent divisions about the map, arguing hotly

a list that shows which projects are on an "amber light" for funding during the next seven years. No doubt the list will be greeted with cheers in some places and with dismay in others, but people will know where they stand. We will also tackle grant-in-aid with vigour and with a sense of purpose. The past approach of equal misery for everyone is cowardly and fails to reward success. If all we do is dole out the same share of the pot to the same institutions year after year (and it's close to that) we should be replaced by a computer at DCMS.

We have appointed a strong new council with flair, serious arts credibility and experience. We will have a creative dialogue with advisory groups and we will make informed and open decisions on what to support in a way that encourages success rather than penalising it.

Many commentators warn me in doom-laden voices about the arm's-length principle which is about avoiding government intrusion. Neither I, nor the other members of the new council, took on this job to have the decisions made by someone else. I like and respect Chris Smith. While the flak has exploded around him he has been quietly and courageously tackling some very difficult issues. He has not interfered and neither should he. It would be highly dangerous for politicians who are subject to swings in political and artistic opinion to try to determine the detail of arts funding. We now have good dialogue between DCMS and ourselves. That doesn't change the fact that we do need more money for the arts and, believe me, we will fight diligently for it. We will stand a better chance of success if we're seen to have put our house in order first.



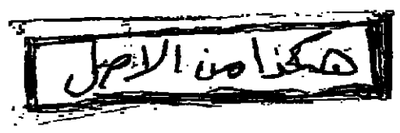
Despite the fact that in 1967 a select committee called for delegation of funding to the regions, we have achieved almost nothing. Much debate has taken place but we've been impressively short on action. However, by the end of this year a very substantial proportion of funding will be handed over to the regions, where it properly belongs. Regional arts boards will make their own decisions within an agreed broad plan and they too will be held to account for their achievements.

What is most impressive — often the case in these situations — is that many excellent and hard working officers and staff in the Arts Council have gone on against the odds to achieve a great deal in their own fields. They will be encouraged, I hope, by the opportunity presented by the changes to make their lives less complicated and their achievements more easily recognised.

Sir Richard Eyre's report on the Royal Opera House calls for "a new contract with the arts world, one that has obligations and responsibilities on both sides in which the wearying mutual animosity between artists and funders would become a healthy and benign dialogue". I don't know about Joan Bakewell, but I'm up for that.

Gerry Robinson is the new chairman of the Arts Council





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'The Orange Order marches through our village — and is ignored'
Jon Meyer, Letters

Clean up the lobby

Labour looks grubby

IT is, as the American humourist Yogi Berra used to say, *deja vu* all over again. The burgeoning row over New Labour and its friends in the lobbying industry has been a trip down one of British politics' darker memory lanes. There are echoes of the immediate past and the Formula One affair, in which Labour stood accused of selling access, and even policy decisions, for cash: a £1 million donation in return for a U-turn on tobacco sponsorship. But the more troubling parallel for the Government is with the sleaze that mired the Major administration in its final years. Then as now, lobbyists were revealed to be swaggering around London, bragging of their ability to open the doors of power to those willing to pay. For a Government elected on a wave of disgust at Tory sleaze, the parallel is uncomfortable. For the weekend revelations in the Observer raise a question first posed by Martin Bell, conqueror of the sleazemeister-general Neil Hamilton, in the Commons during the Ecclestone furore: have we slayed the dragon of sleaze to replace it with one clasping a red rose between its teeth?

Certainly the whole business reeks. Few Britons who believed May 1, 1997, signalled the start of a new era can be anything but appalled to read comments like those attributed to Derek Draper, the former aide to Peter Mandelson and professional big-mouth. "I just want to stuff my bank account at £250 an hour," he said — as if to confirm that today's Labour Party has become home to a special breed of Thatcher's children: young, thrusting men with few principles beyond a 1980s-style lust for cash and fast-living. The notion that such profiteering followed an election victory fuelled by a public hunger for clean politics makes it all the harder to stomach. Yesterday's sacking and suspension of Mr Draper from two of his nice little earners offers some consolation — but not much.

Still, there are some important distinctions to be made. The truly pernicious element in Tory sleaze was not that the lobbyist Ian Greer traded on his contacts with ministers and MPs, but that the politicians themselves were on the take. There is no suggestion of that here. Indeed, so far Labour's scandal reads like Ian Greer without Neil Hamilton: we have the lobbyists selling access, but no ministers profiting from it themselves. That's why the role of Roger Liddle has attracted such attention. As a special adviser at Number 10, he is the only person *inside* government to be linked to the alleged trade in cash-for-access. Mr Liddle has to counter the Observer's claim that he offered to open key Whitehall doors to a man he took for a US businessman for his own position to be tenable.

A second distinction centres on lobbying itself. One of the companies named by the Observer, LLM, insists it offers only advice and analysis, not access: they guide clients through the political maze the way lawyers guide clients through the law. But, to follow their own analogy, they have to prove that what they were selling was their knowledge of the law — not the fact that they knew the judge. The Observer quoted one LLM executive bragging about his ability to get through to Gordon Brown: that suggests LLM were edging across the line they themselves describe. They need to establish they were, as they insist, selling expertise, not insider access. Plenty of people would doubtless wish the lobbying industry did not exist, that big businesses wrote to their MPs like the rest of us. That's probably unrealistic, but there does need to be some hard thinking — perhaps by the Neill committee, and certainly by the rest of us — on how the industry might be supervised. It might take a statutory code. Either way, Labour was elected to clean up government: it should shed these hangers-on right away.

CSA made simple

But will the poorest miss out?

PARLIAMENT was almost unrecognisable yesterday. There was no blatant point-scoring from either government or opposition benches. There was a sense of shared responsibility — even humility — for the fiasco that the child support agency has become. And there was an open search for a new consensus on a fair system of child maintenance from separated parents. Social Security Secretary Harriet Harman helped set the tone with a non-triumphalist opening speech. She is right to reduce the complexity of the present scheme; right not to return maintenance to lawyers and courts; and right to search for a consensus. But one question remained unanswered: are we in danger of moving from an over-complex system to a too simplistic alternative?

Complexity was introduced with the best of motives — making the system sensitive to the many different circumstances separated families face — but the worst result: an over-bureaucratic scheme bogged down by delays, backlogs, and assessments. Over 90 per cent of staff time is spent calculating payments leaving only 10 per cent to ensuring assessments are collected. Almost two million children of separated parents still receive no contribution from absent parents. One third of all cases take more than six months to process producing a backlog of 400,000 cases with up to £1 billion owed in back-payments.

The new simple formula will cut through this miasmic mess. Instead of 100 different factors to be fed into the agency's computer, the new assessment will be based on net income (after tax and national insurance) of the separated parent and the number of children in the first (and second) family. The average separated father will be able to work it out without a computer. Moreover, a new incentive has been introduced for separated mothers on income support. They can keep the first £10 before having their benefits reduced. The sum may be small but an important principle has been established: the Treasury does not absorb all maintenance paid to people on welfare.

Inevitably, simpler systems are cruder. Less predictably, the new one looks more regressive: of the 30 per cent due to pay more, a disproportionate number are low paid and in the 70 per cent paying less, a disproportionate number better-off. One out of four mothers will receive less. The new tribunal could introduce lawyers — and complexity — through the backdoor. But Parliament has learned its lesson: the detail needs detailed scrutiny. Sensibly, ministers conceded pre-legislative hearings.

Sun spots

Nine things you didn't know . . .

UNDER its new editor, David Yelland, the Sun newspaper has lost none of the searing invective that has made it such a national institution. Yesterday it castigated the BBC once again not so much for what it does but for existing at all. In an age when hundreds of channels are available why — it asked — should 97 per cent of the population pay a compulsory tax just to watch two? The BBC stands accused of spending YOUR money to lure stars from ITV to jack up its ratings to justify your £91.50p licence fee. Worse, the Beeb has for years presumed it produces the best TV in the world yet a host of current hits like Friends, The Simpsons and ER are made in America. And how would "egomaniacs" like Jeremy Paxman and David Dimbleby fare in free-market American TV? Why they would be lucky to get a job sweeping the studio floors. But at least — it adds — that would be a better use of their talents. All good knockabout stuff.

Sadly, pressure of space forced the Sun to drop an accompanying article "Nine things you didn't know about today's Sun editorial". This might have included: 1) The BBC's licence fee is actually £97.50 not £91.50. 2) But this fades into insignificance when comparing value-for-money beside Sky — lowest price, £179.88 a year, or up to £350 a year or more when you add the various premium sport and movie channels. 3) Simpsons, ER and Friends all appear on Sky first. 4) The BBC's home-generated production (excluding sport and news) is 70 per cent. 5) Sky's home output is less than 10 per cent. 6) Sky has just happily signed the dreaded BBC up for two of its own digital channels. 7) Rupert Murdoch is an American citizen. 8) Yesterday's second editorial eulogising the genius of Johnny Speight in creating "one of the most enduring TV characters of all time" forgot to mention that Till Death Us Do Part was on the BBC. 9) ... oh and Rupert Murdoch's empire, which owns the Sun, also owns 40 per cent of BSkyB.

Whatever happened to the noble tradition of declaring conflicts of interest?

Letters to the Editor

Sporting exchanges

TWO clues for Leo Baxendale (Letters, July 6). Wasn't the Barmy Army a group of Sheena Easton fans? The Barmy Army was also the name of an '80s pop group which mixed dub music with samples of football chants. Their "Glory Glory — Sharp as a Needle" was a tribute to Kenny Dalglish.
D Cameron.
Liverpool.

I ENDORSE the suggestion that, in the event of a tied game, play continues until the scoring of a golden goal, with each side withdrawing a player every 10 minutes (Letters, July 4). I look forward to the state of play after 110 minutes without a further goal and with no players left on the field. Football would then become the ultimate minimalist sport.
Steve Cohen.
Manchester.

ENGLAND loses a football match. Quick, change the rules.
Jim Patterson.
London.

THANK the Lord for St Dennis Bergkamp's "goal of the tournament" which has rightfully upstaged the goal-bound sprint of that spotty little diver Michael Owen. The genius Dutchman's right instep has emphatically perished the thought that a player sporting three lions on his over-size shirt would end up scoring the finest goal of France 98. Richard Williams and Jeremy Hardy will now, I am sure, sleep easier in their beds.
Andrew Bell.
Morden, Surrey.

BBC TV's obsession with cricket is verging on the irrational and now averages more than 20 hours a week. On Sunday, only a few hundred people turned up to watch England and South Africa. The BBC set aside *five hours* of viewing time. For that, my 86-year-old mother had to pay her £97.50 licence fee.
John Alley.
Comberbach, Cumbria.

DON'T we have to suffer enough watching South Africa outplay a pathetic England team without the BBC inflicting Boycott on us again?
Brian Kirby.
Newquay, Cornwall.

More yellow than Orange

THE right to freedom of assembly is indeed fundamental (Leader, July 6), but there is a limit to what constitutes an assembly and what is an action likely to cause a breach of the peace. What would be the position of your paper with regard to, say, a National Front march in Notting Hill, Toxteth or Bradford?

The only way to get a march down the Garvaghy Road is to imprison the innocent, law-abiding, Catholic population of that road in their own homes. What then of these people's right of assembly, or their right to live without fear and intimidation? The Parades Commission has not said the Orange Order cannot march, simply that they cannot march down one particular road where that march will cause pain, fear and offence.
Andrew Harbison.
Dublin.

THE feelings of Garvaghy Road residents are analogous to the feelings of East London Jews awaiting a march by Mosley supporters in the 1930s (Roadblock to peace, July 6). The right to assemble in circumstances where the safety of minority groupings is threatened should not be guaranteed under a democracy.

The Orange Order needs to tread gently. In the recent election, a slim majority of people in Northern Ireland voted for unionist candidates, and half of those voters supported pro-assembly candidates. Would the Orange Order support the democratic wishes of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland to leave the UK? When the answer to that question is Yes, the Garvaghy Road residents should withdraw their objections to the march.
Tom White.
Birmingham.

NO ONE is denying the Orange Order the right of peaceful assembly. The right of assembly is subject everywhere else it exists to public order restrictions of time, route and place.
Tim Reuter.
University of Southampton.

IS IT too simple to suggest that the parade goes down the Garvaghy Road on alternate years?
Barry Waltho.
Altrincham, Cheshire.

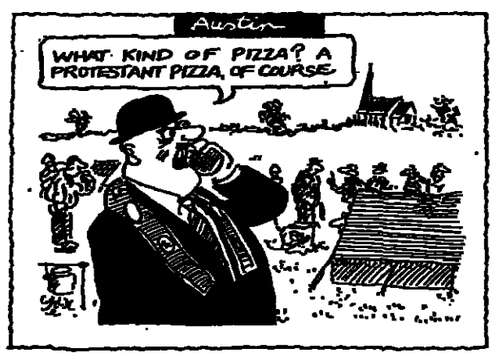
NORMALLY, when a group of people want to show pride in their culture and traditions, they make such events as inclusive as possible. Saturday's Gay Pride March or the Notting Hill Carnival are celebrations of diversity which do not exclude Londoners who are neither gay nor Afro-Caribbean.

It would be easier to take seriously the Orange Order's claims to be celebrating civil and religious liberty if it did not, as a first principle, stop anyone who happens to be Catholic going to the party. A dog urinating against a tree to mark its territory probably has a better idea of freedom than the Orangemen who want to parade through the streets of people who don't want them there.
Liam MacGaid.
London.

FROM time to time the Orange Order passes through our village. However, they march through deserted streets and are totally ignored by the villagers. It seems a better way to preserve the peace than the huffing and puffing confrontational attitude presently displayed by both sides.
Jon Meyer.
Loanhead, Midlothian.

GIVE peace a chance. Let all the residents of Drumcree back down. Let the police and the army take down the barricades and erect marquees in the disputed area. Let the nationalist residents don orange clothing, and provide a tea party for the Orange Order. Let the Orange Order accept that peace is more important than any banner waving march. Talk to one another. Make the Drumcree march a symbol of peace and reconciliation.
Geoff Freeman.
Bracknell, Berkshire.

WITH its doctrine of forgiveness, love and humility, has anybody thought about introducing Christianity to the two sides at Dumcree?
Simon Vogel.
Harlow, Essex.



Lessons to be learnt from the murderous deputy head

AS A parent of children attending East Sussex County Council schools, I was alarmed to discover that Sion Jenkins, convicted murderer of his foster daughter Billie-Jo, fabricated entirely his academic background when applying for teaching posts (The luckless child murdered by a control freak, July 3). These inventions were apparently never uncovered, even when he applied for the deputy headship, and then headship, of a large boys' comprehensive school in Hastings. Both these applications were successful.

It seems to me a matter of grave public concern that teachers in state schools can be employed without the slightest check being made on their claimed academic history. I am writing to the director of education for East Sussex asking for an assurance that he will institute immediately a thorough examination of the academic and career backgrounds of all heads and deputy heads of schools for which he is responsible.
Name and address supplied.

FOR some years the public has been urged to foster "older children" — from four to 14 years old. Often these children have already experienced several family placements, but time and time again they have "broken down", leaving a trail of wrecked families. Many such children are extremely disturbed, difficult to handle and manipulative.

Yet very little expertise is available in terms of advice for the foster parents or treatment for the children, and usually no help at all is available once the child has been adopted. Before something even worse happens, may we have a searching inquiry into the state of children cared for by local authorities.
Ken Redgrave.
(Consultant in child care),
Northwich, Cheshire.

Why Eurofighter will take off

YOU state "The Eurofighter might not be able to land on the new carriers" (Labour's £8bn for new ships, July 4). The Eurofighter is not designed to and this is the reason why it's both cheaper and more capable than the Dassault Rafale, which doesn't "land" on carriers either; Rafale is designed to crash into a cat's cradle of wires and then be blasted off the deck by a steam catapult.

The crashing into wires bit means that even the land-based version of the Rafale carries a structural penalty — which makes it expensive. But it's the catapult bit which makes it so much less capable: coping with clouds of steam means an air-intake that makes it slower than the Eurofighter.

The Eurofighter is needed. The RAF has to protect one of the biggest air-defence regions in Nato and the Treasury wants to sell as many airfields as it can. The RAF now requires supercruising fighters to reach all corners of the UK. The new carriers will be equipped with Sea Harriers in the first instance and the ASTOVL version of the Joint Strike Fighter in the second. Neither steam nor cat's cradles are required.

The new carrier has to carry fighters, attack helicopters and anti-submarines helicopters. This isn't feasible with even a 40,000-ton carrier using the Dassault Rafale or F-18. It's only the tidy landing habits of the Harrier and JSF which make it possible.
Matthew Spencer.
Bedfordshire.

Red watch

THERE is nothing sinister about John Macmurray's name appearing on George Orwell's list of Soviet fellow-travellers (Blair outstrips his guru, July 1). It is merely one example of the Establishment looking for reds under every bed except the right one. The BBC's head of security, Sir Robert Maconachie, was convinced that Macmurray had infected the whole of the BBC religious affairs department with subversive ideas. So he appointed one of his "trusties" from his security force to keep them under watch. And whom did he appoint? None other than Guy Burgess.
Philip Hunt.
Chairman, John Macmurray Fellowship, Bath.

Dads betrayed by the law

ACCORDING to Polly Toynbee, One Parent Families wants to protect mothers who are uncertain about what relationship they want with their child's father (New rights for fathers, July 6). Perhaps stronger knicker elastic would help encourage mature consideration before embarking on an unsatisfactory relationship.

Section 4 of the Children Act 1989 allows an unmarried father to acquire Parental Responsibility by agreement with the mother. If register officers made this clear to applicants for birth registration the present lack of awareness of the existence of PR agreements would have been obviated.

The Lord Chancellor's initiative will merely rectify the earlier lacuna, but will still leave 50,000 unmarried fathers a year without automatic PR status. That should adequately protect the "worried mum's lobby".
Trevor Berry.
President, Families Need Fathers, Bromley, Kent.

POLLY Toynbee is wrong to suggest that only fathers' groups favour giving parental responsibility to unmarried fathers. In 1989, the Scottish Law Commission recommended precisely the same reform, as did the English Law Commission more recently. The Institute of Public Policy Research, an influential liberal think-tank, also urged this change three years ago.

There is a tide of informed and progressive opinion running in favour of this reform of family law. There are certainly real objections to it, but their worth is not served by suggesting that the impetus for change comes only from a bunch of "men".

If you unearthed a situation in this country in which 250,000 women and their children were suffering legal discrimination, you would rightly be up in arms.
Leo Jasmin.
Warboys, Cambs.

Paying for sex

KATHARINE Viner (Women and children last, July 6) rightly condemns the injustice and inequality whereby women aged over 36 working in newspapers earn £5,000 per annum less than men of the same age. Yet she describes the situation where men under 36 earn £7,000 less than women of the same age as . . . the good news for women.

Surely there should be no differences based on sex, and there should be campaigns to end any sex-related inequalities wherever they occur — not just when the sufferer is female? And certainly injustice should not be praised as being good — as would be obvious if the rest of the article was presented as the good news for men. It may appear to be redressing an historical imbalance, but I want my daughter and son to have an equal chance in life, neither to be given advantage over the other on the basis of their sex or society's past wrongs in which they have played no part.
Tony Morbin.
London.

Torn apart

I DISAGREE with Susie Orbach (Hearts and minds, July 1) about the good things that come from divorce. I've moved from our large family home, among friends and support, to a scruffy terraced house in a new area.

Yes, my son has extra quality time with his father to build a new and closer relationship. The trouble is that my ex-partner is using all his charm and energies to woo his new wife. Our son says he feels left out, that his dad loves his new wife more than him and that he has a new family now. Lately he's been worried that I might be enjoying my weekends without him more than my time with him. Yes, there is no more conflict between his parents, but the only message my son is receiving is that when the going gets tough, get out and start again.

Unless there's physical abuse, there's nothing worse than tearing a small child in half and expecting him to relish the unfolding complications of his little life. Children like a family like the one in the picture books, I'm afraid.
Name and address supplied.

Health service faces charges of inequality

THE chief executive of the NHS, Sir Alan Langlands, says he will resign rather than countenance any extension of charging for health care (Chief to quit NHS if fees imposed, July 4). He explained this by saying charges would "challenge the ambition of equal access to health care", eroding the NHS's role in reducing inequalities in health.

If charges contribute to health inequality, how come inequalities are so great in the UK where health care is free? There is less health inequality in countries such as Sweden where patients have always paid modest but significant sums to see a doctor. The truth is that having a free health service does not encourage access — particularly when the consequence is a shortage of resources and acute rationing.

People over 60, for example, are less likely to get kidney dialysis in the UK than in most of the rest of Europe (or the US for that matter). British patients are denied life-saving and life-enhancing drugs on the specious grounds that they are too new for general release. Of course if they are rich enough to afford private treatment, they will get these things — but that is hardly equality of access.

Charging at reasonable levels is affordable, would raise £5bn a year extra and provide funds to tackle health inequality seriously. The future of the NHS is bleak if it cannot improve the standard of health care most people in Britain deserve and expect.
John Willman.
London.

THE Prime Minister is absolutely right that the NHS needs re-organising round modern technology and especially telemedicine. May I remind you of the case so well argued in your own columns for this to include a properly planned broadband communications infrastructure using fibre optics right out to GPs' surgeries?

Two years' detailed study by our telecoms industry team has shown that this, coupled with modern medical physics advances like 3D ultra-sound, could help to save the service £350m a year, cut waiting lists by up to 20 per cent and provide key help to GPs in their crucial front line role.
J M Harper.
East Sussex.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We regret we cannot acknowledge those not used. The Country Diary is on Page 12



Martin Seymour-Smith

Postcards from the edge

MARTIN Seymour-Smith, who has died aged 70, was for many years an all-rounder on the literary scene, a compiler of reference books about writers, a poet whose output was small but significant, a critic and editor, and a writer on social, mainly sexual, issues.

Born in London, he graduated from Oxford, where his contemporaries included the poets A Alvarez and John Dunne. He was a central figure in student poetic circles, editing the magazine *Isis* in his final year. After national service in the Middle East, he turned, with some reluctance, to teaching. He approached Robert Graves to write a study of his work (it appeared in 1956), and soon afterwards was engaged by the poet to tutor his son on Majorca.

The connection with Graves remained a continuing interest and resulted in the major biography, *Robert Graves: His Life and Work*, which was published in 1982, three years before its subject's death. It may well be Seymour-Smith's most enduring monument. He also wrote biographies of Kipling in 1989 and Hardy in 1994, as well as many shorter literary studies and monographs, and articles



Seymour-Smith . . . eclectic

and reviews for a variety of publications.

Eclecticism was his trademark and in many ways he was a character out of Gissing. He would like to have been literary editor of a major newspaper or literary periodical, but the opportunity never came his way. He had a reputation for being difficult and was never a member of the inner literary establishment of those, often school or university cronies, who handed out the plum jobs to each other. He turned his hand to whatever literary work came to hand, and found new ways of filling holes left by other editors and critics.

In addition to such reference books as his *Guide to Modern World Literature* (1973) and *Who's Who in Twentieth Century Literature* (1976), Seymour-Smith wrote *How to Succeed in Poetry Without Really Reading or Writing* (1986) and, 20 years earlier, a *Bluffer's Guide to Literature*. Both were half-serious guides to helping your literary career through bluff and the absorption of clichés, which were designed at the same time to satirise the pretensions of the literary establishment.

His interest in poetry found expression in his own verse and in two published volumes, *Tea with Miss Stockport* (1963) and *Reminiscences of Norma*, which appeared eight years later. His poetry is principally narrative, strangely indicative of problems that arose in his own life, but treated in an ambiguous manner that blended fantasy with event, and suggested that we all have darker desires than could be guessed at from the facades we present to the world.

A barely concealed love of violence is a major theme, and so is a strong sexuality that emerges as farce and irony as well as eroticism. Seymour-Smith draws characters that are well-defined and credible, but also bizarre and sinister. An underlying unease runs through his poetic narratives, which he goes to some pains to obscure. Perhaps it is this need of concealment that prevented him from turning to the novel.

The poetic instinct is genuine and has been admired but it has also been criticised as taxing and frustrating to read, because the poet hides himself so carefully in his verses that one can never be sure what is serious and what mocking. The narrator is both an observer and a participator in the sexual comedy, but if he is an *alter ego* he is also an intellectually glamorised version of his creator.

Among Seymour-Smith's books of criticism are *Poets Through Their Letters* (1969). He also published a social study of *Fallen Women* (1969) and a popular sociological survey, *Sex and Society* (1975). He produced two critical editions of Shakespeare's sonnets, of Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* at the same time, and in 1972 a perceptive edition of *Longer Elizabethan Poems*.

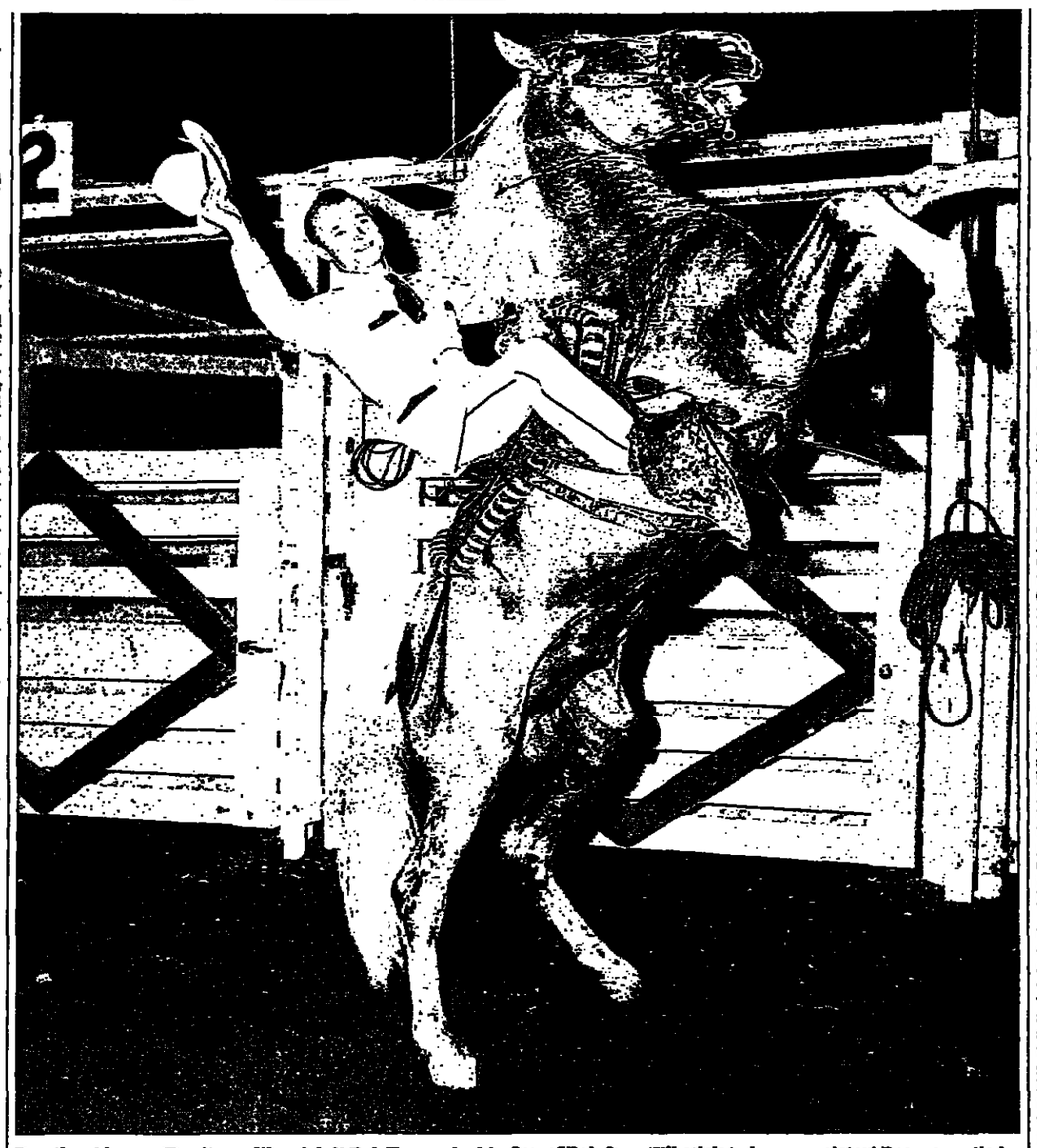
His serious reference books did something to make readers aware of neglected writers, especially Europeans undervalued in Britain, and his assessments were always fair and generous. His often humorous approach to serious literature, especially in the *Bluffer's Guide*, undoubtedly did him harm with the literary establishment that mistrusts humour, especially mockery, and is often overly self-protective.

He has been criticised for debunking some literary icons, as well as for bringing a populist approach to studies of the same writers. He was better appreciated in the United States than in Britain, and his reference works had a larger following there.

He is survived by his wife Janet and their two daughters.

John Calder

Martin Seymour-Smith, poet, critic and editor, born April 24, 1928; died July 1, 1998



Roy the rider . . . 'Don't you like girls?' Bob Hope asked in Son of Paleface. 'I'll stick to horses, mister' Rogers replied

Roy Rogers

Western frontman

ROY ROGERS, the boyish, dimpled, Trigger-happy, singing cowboy, who looked as though he bought his tasselled outfits and 10-gallon hat from Nieman and Marcus department store, has died aged 85. "When I die just skin me out and put me up on old Trigger, and I'll be happy," he once said. Unfortunately, Trigger, billed as "the smartest horse in movies", has long been carrying ghost riders in the sky. The Palomino stallion died in 1966, aged 33.

Rogers, whose real name was Leonard Slye, was born in the industrial city of Cincinnati. His father, who worked in a shoe factory, wanted him to become a dentist, but the 17-year-old arrived in California in 1929 as a migratory fruit picker. After a spell as a cowhand in New Mexico, where he learned a number of tricks with a lasso, he joined his cousin in a singing duo, and changed his name to Dick Weston.

He then formed the singing group, The Sons of the Pioneers, with which he appeared on radio and later in films. Ever since the early days of sound, songs have been an essential ingredient in a Western, and a heroine could barely step out of her house without The Sons of the Pioneers jumping out from behind a sage bush to serenade her.

As Roy Rogers, he soon took over from Gene Autry as "king of the cowboys" in scores of B-Westerns in the 1940s, frequently suspending the action to croon his songs sweetly and causing audible ennui among matinee audiences. He was most often teamed with comic sidekicks, toothless, grey-bearded George "Gabby" Hayes, or pudgy, raspy-voiced dimwit Andy Devine, and heroine Dale Evans, in knee-high boots, on her horse Buttercup. Rogers's first wife, Adele, had died in 1946, and when he and Evans married the following year Republic Studios boss Herbert Yates replaced her because he thought no one would believe Rogers's pursuit of his own wife.

The movies, in which Rogers epitomised the clean-living, straight-talking cowboy, had interchangeable plots and titles such as *Under Western Skies*, *Song of Texas*, *Song of Arizona*, *Robin Hood of the Pecos*, *The Cowboy and the Senorita* and *Don't Fence Me In*, the latter Cole Porter number being one of his biggest hit songs. Rogers was also very successful singing "A four-legged friend, a four-legged friend, he'll never let you down. He's honest and faithful right up to the end, that one, two, three, four-legged friend."

He sang this in *Son of Paleface* (1952), in which he was delightfully self-mocking. While Bob Hope ogles Jane Russell suggestively singing "What a night for a wing-ding," Rogers hardly blinks. "What's the matter?" asks Hope. "Don't you like girls?" "I'll stick to horses, mister," the cowboy replies stony-faced. In fact, it is Hope that ends up in bed with Trigger.

When the second feature Western began to disappear from the cinemas in the early 1950s, Rogers reached an even wider audience on television with *The Roy Rogers Show*, co-starring Dale Evans, which ran for six years from 1951. Of his success, Rogers remarked in 1954: "It's certainly not my acting. I don't call myself an actor; anyway I'm just a simple, country-talkin' guy. Must be God is on my side. I'm a Christian cowboy. I found the Lord five years ago." He was also a supporter of right-wing causes such as the gun lobby.

Although he maintained publicly that he never smoked or drank, he did like a whisky of an evening at his ranch in Apple Valley, about 90 miles east of Los Angeles. However, he and Dale expressed their disgust when they went to see *Midnight Cowboy* in 1969, thinking it was a Western. Six years later, Rogers returned to the big screen for the first time in over two decades in *Mackintosh and T J*, in which he played a corny, philosophical ranch-hand who befriends a tough urban kid.

Roy and Dale raised nine children, two by his previous marriage, one by hers, one of their own, four by adoption and one they fostered. For their sake, as much as out of conviction, he disliked violent Westerns. "When I was a boy, our parents taught us that hitting below the belt was a cowardly thing," he once remarked. "I don't think this kind of thing is entertainment, no matter how you look at it."

The Roy Rogers Show had earned him $30 million a year. As the owner of a TV production company, a chain of restaurants carrying his name, Western products, real estate, thoroughbred horses and cattle, Rogers's wealth was estimated at around $100 million. That's a lot of oats!

Ronald Bergan

Roy Rogers (Leonard Slye), singer, actor, born November 5, 1912; died July 6, 1998



Roy the singer . . . 'I don't call myself an actor. I'm just a simple, country-talkin' guy. Must be God is on my side. I'm a Christian cowboy. I found the Lord five years ago'

Professor Francis Carsten

New light on the Reich

PROFESSOR Francis Carsten, who has died aged 86, was one of the last of that extraordinary 1930s generation of German-Jewish exiles who enriched post-war British cultural and intellectual life.

Born in Berlin, he grew up in a conservative, professional family but rebelled against the Prussian authoritarianism of his grammar school and joined the Communist Party youth organisation. By 1931, he had become disillusioned with the ultra-left tactics of the German Communist Party, and joined the clandestine *Neu-Beginnen* (new beginning) — another member was Willy Brandt — which aimed to bring the feuding factions of the labour movement together in resistance to Nazism.

After the Nazi takeover in 1933 Carsten worked on in the Resistance until the arrest of most of his friends by the Gestapo made the task impossible. After breaking into the flat of one of the organisation's arrested members — the house was opposite a police station — in the middle of the night, and clearing it of incriminating material, he left for London.

Here he quickly became irritated by what he called "the endless bickering and the personal feuds among the political refugees" and on the advice of his friend, the sociologist Norbert Elias, Carsten moved to Amsterdam for three years. He had become suspicious of Communist Party members as a result of the underhand tactics they were using against rival leftists in the Spanish Civil War. He clashed with the future East German leader Walter Ulbricht, as well as with the exiled social democrat leaders in Prague. All this convinced him that exile politics were futile, and in 1938 he returned to London determined to become a historian.

Carsten's interest was in finding out what had "gone wrong" with German history. He applied to Wadham College, Oxford, to do a doctorate on the origins of Junker domination in Prussia and was active in the Democratic Socialist Club, alongside such figures as Roy Jenkins and Anthony Crosland. After a brief period of internment as an enemy alien, he completed his dissertation in 1942.

HE then joined the government's Political Warfare Executive, writing the main parts of a handbook on Germany for the guidance of British officers. It was Carsten who rejected the historical part of the handbook, written by A J P Taylor and subsequently published as *The Course of German History*. It was, he later said, too biased and too full of mistakes.

In 1947 Carsten became a lecturer at Westfield College, in the University of London. He moved to the School of Slavonic and East European Studies as Masaryk Professor of Central European History in 1961, remaining there until his retirement. He had a quiet but unmistakable influence in training generations of PhD students in archival research on modern German history at a time when few others were doing this in Britain.

In 1954 he published his first book, *The Origins of Prussia*, a much-expanded version of his thesis, followed in 1959 by *Princes and Parliaments in Germany*. These major studies of Junker domination, and parliamentary alternatives to it in early modern Germany, were followed in 1966 by perhaps the most important of his books, *The Reichswehr and Politics 1918-1933*. This laid bare for the first time the extent of the German army's hostility to the Weimar republic.

Carsten's most popular book, *The Rise of Fascism* (1967), was one of the first serious comparative studies of fascism in Europe, and was followed by three research based monographs, *Fascist Movements in Austria* (1977), *Revolution in Central Europe 1918-1919* (1972) and *War against War* (1982), a comparative study of left-wing, anti-war movements in Britain and Germany at the time of the first world war.

These books argued that fear of Bolshevism, the division of the labour movement, and the strength of the conservative elites were the principal reasons for the failure of democratisation in central Europe after the first world war. They revealed Carsten as a representative of the kind of social democratic historiography which had been repressed by the German historical profession, and it was not surprising that they aroused considerable hostility from conservative German historians.

It was only with the arrival of a generation of left-inclined university teachers in Germany after 1968 that his work became more widely accepted there and more frequently translated.

As his health, and that of his wife, made it more difficult for him to visit German archives, Carsten produced a stream of studies based mainly on printed and other sources available in Britain, including biographies of the German socialist leaders Auguste Bebel and Eduard Bernstein, a study of British Foreign Office attitudes to, and reports of, the Weimar republic, and *A History of the Prussian Junkers* (1989). While never less than sound, these inevitably lacked something of the originality and excitement of his earlier work. His last book, *The German Workers and the Nazis*, published in 1995, brought him full circle back to his early political life and included a strong element of personal reminiscence.



Carsten . . . quiet influence

The most modest and least pretentious of men, Carsten enjoyed the informality of British academia, which recognised his work by electing him a fellow of the British Academy, but he also appreciated his growing acceptance in Germany in later life.

He remained active well into his eighties, reporting proudly that he still mowed the lawn and tended the garden of his large house in Hampstead while most of his much younger neighbours employed gardeners to do the work for them. His wife Ruth died in 1994. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

Richard J Evans

Francis Ludwig Carsten, historian, born June 25, 1911; died June 23, 1998

Death Notices

BLACKWELL. Muriel, suddenly on 24th June. Former music adviser, Hastings, Barnet and Brent. No letters or flowers. Friends welcome at Golders Green Crematorium, NW11 at 2pm Friday, 10th July

CONNELL. The funeral for Doctor Ian Connell, who died on 29th June, aged 49, will take place at 1pm, Friday 10th July, at the Robin Hood Crematorium, Birmingham.

GREENBOROUGH, K.B.E., Sir John Hedley, died peacefully in his sleep at his home on 3rd July 1998 Beloved husband of Lady Gloria and devoted father of Rolf. Private family funeral. A memorial service is being planned, to be held in early September All enquiries to, Edmund Middlehurst Gregsons Solicitors, St Christopher's House, Tabor Grove, Wimbledon SW19 4EX 0181 946 1173

KEEGAN. Catherine née Gilmour, Architect, after a short illness, on Tuesday 30th June. Wife of Patrick, mother of Nicholas Funeral at Wye Parish Church on Friday, 10th July at 11.30am Family flowers only; donations to Wye Millennium Project Details from W Garstin & Son, Funeral Directors, 12 Chiltern Street, London W1 1PD

PORTER, Kenneth, on 2nd July, 1998, peacefully in hospital in Stockport, and at Avening, aged 92 years. Dearly beloved husband of the late Winifred, and much loved by all his family Enquiries regarding funeral arrangements to George Bell and Son. Tel 0161 432 2131.

In Memoriam

HEATHER-HAYES, Jim, died tragically, aged 18 years 7 7 80 "Shine on Jim"

Births

LEVENSON, Kitty, born July 4th 1998, to Imogen (nee Carruthers) and Daniel, bringing joy and delight to Sian, Ben, Maxim and both families

Birthdays

BEAUMONT, Susan M - 7-7-1948 Happy birthday, to the most honest, fiercest and darlin' person I could ever hope to meet. Louise

Anniversaries

CAPLIN, Scott. Happy first anniversary thanks for a great year, with all my love, Tracey

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Letters

Clement Dodd writes: I experienced the generosity of spirit of Paul Stirling *(Obituary, July 2)* when setting up the modern Turkish studies programme in the University of London a few years ago. The project fired his imagination. Not only did he come in to teach his subject, he also chaired the very popular fortnightly seminar with that mixture of enthusiasm and intellectual scepticism that was his hallmark. In addition, his practical help and advice in raising resources was invaluable. Outspoken though he could be about Turkey and its shortcomings, he was a true Turcophile, dedicated to the promotion of studies in that curiously neglected field.

Win Hopper writes: I think I must have owned one of the Durham quilts of Amy Emms *(Obituary, June 27)* — a wonderful and much-loved cover which lasted for many, many years. We Hopper girls from a Dunstan, Newcastle, family were given them as wedding presents in the 1920s.

A Country Diary

CHESHIRE: Although we have just seen one of the wettest Junes this century, last year was apparently even worse, having been the wettest on record. The excessive rainfall over the past month has left its mark on the local landscape with tall, lush vegetation everywhere — along the hedgerows, roadside verges and embankments, and carpeting the few remaining hay meadows around the village. But it is all a monotonous green; too much water and not enough sunshine have encouraged growth at the expense of flowers.

After several days spent searching for a typical June show of summer flowers, I was finally rewarded at the end of last week with the discovery of a small marl pit that was ablaze with colour and full of those plants which are at home in or near water. I had wandered well away from the village and at one point clambered over a newly-erected stile into a field almost waist high with grasses. The only indication of a path was a narrow line of trampled grass leading towards several large oaks that marked the far boundary. When almost at the end of this little-used track, I saw a group of pink flowers with the unmistakable jagged petals of ragged robin. I pushed my way through the damp vegetation and found the marl pit.

The damp clay banks were a mass of colour — whites, yellows, blues, purple and pink, with a wide row of tall spike rushes leading out into the centre of the small pond, where the flat leaves of a white water-lily clustered around three freshly-opened flowers. I found the scrambling marshbedstraw and bog stitchwort, water forget-me-not, a St Johnswort, and marsh cinquefoil amongst the plants crowding the banks of that beautiful, hidden water garden.

As I headed back towards the village I put up two skylarks from the edge of a wheat field — very scarce birds in our district these days.

J M THOMPSON

Birthdays

Shami Ahmed, jeans manufacturer, 36; **Michael Ancram,** Conservative MP, 53; **Pierre Cardin,** fashion designer, 76; **David Cope,** environmentalist, 52; **Jeremy Guscott,** rugby player, 33; **Michael Howard,** MP, former Conservative minister, 57; **Prof Tom Husband,** mechanical engineer, 62; **Tony Jacklin,** golfer, 54; **Glenys Kinnock,** Labour MEP, 54; **Hamish MacInnes,** mountaineer, 68; **Bill Oddie,** comedian and ornithologist, 57; **Camilla Parker Bowles,** 51; **Prof Suzanne Romaine,** English scholar, 47; **Sir Steven Runciman,** historian of Byzantium, 95; **Ringo Starr,** former Beatle, 58.

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN A DIARY on page 5, G2, July 1, we said the books of John Macmurray, the former professor of moral philosophy at Edinburgh University, were out of print. At least six of them are not. His name is spelt as it appears here, not with an internal capital M.

IN THE homes & gardens section, page 57, the Guardian Weekend magazine, July 4, we published details of the BayGen Power wind-up, solar-powered radio. Unfortunately the accompanying telephone number was incomplete. The correct number is: 0800 731 3052.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 9589 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Surface mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 119, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER. Fax: 0171 239 9897. E-mail: reader@guardian.co.uk

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Analysis

Select committees

Gerry Robinson in the arts bunker 10

Time for a good whipping?

Donald Anderson (right) is doing his best to make life miserable for Robin Cook. That's what select committees like his were designed for. But **Anne Perkins** and **David Walker** ask if patronage will buy them off



TODAY MPs will be asked to back the Foreign Affairs Committee's campaign to wrest further details of the Sierra Leone arms affair from the Government. Yesterday the alleged leaking of a Trade and Industry report was a primary charge against New Labour's lobbying network. No wonder dozens have been queuing to get into hearings. Commons committees* are hot news.

The British system prides itself on automatic checks and balances preventing abuses of power; might the rise of the select committee be a response to Tony Blair's overweening majority in the Commons? Behind the question of who sees which FO telegrams lies party advantage. The Tories want ministerial scalps and are prepared to talk constitutional outrage to get them. But, posturing aside, minds are being concentrated on a key question: what are Members of Parliament for? Are select committees a way of defining their role as monitors of executive action?

It's an old constitutional mystery. Once it was Pym against Charles I, later Fox against George III. How can the same chamber contain both executive power, wielded by ministers, and legislators without whose votes they get no money to spend. Backbenchers make ministerial government legitimate yet themselves are powerless. In our late 20th-century democracy, where political party affiliation is so strong, do MPs elected on a ticket have any real sway over the Government they promised voters to support? Can MPs be both lobby fodder and fearless custodians of ministerial accountability?

The answer depends on how far Tony Blair's vision for Britain entails eventually weakening the hold of parties on politics. He has talked reform. He charged Ann Taylor, Leader of the House, with modernising the Commons. "Making MPs more effective in holding the executive to account will be Labour's true project for parliament," she promised — and by implication that means cutting the power of party whips. A year on, says one senior Labour committee chairman, "this is the moment when we discover how far New Labour is committed to accountability."

A mutinous spirit stalks the Commons' committee corridor and the feisty mood spreads beyond foreign affairs. Both the Health Committee and the Committee on European Legislation have attacked the Government's handling of the Formula One tobacco sponsorship affair. The Treasury Committee instigated American-style "confirmatory hearings" for members of the Bank of England monetary policy committee. Now the education committee is to do the same, starting with appointments to the Office for Standards in Education. All these committees have Labour chairs.

There's the rub. The governing party has to empower party backbenchers to give ministers a hard time. Giles Radice of the Treasury Committee (under the Tories his sub committee on the civil service produced ground-breaking new rules for how ministers should behave) is anxious. "There is a danger of pushing for something you might not get. It could just expose your weakness." Donald Anderson for the Foreign Affairs' committee believes that the Foreign Secretary's refusal to provide papers is a matter of principle, too grave to let slip.

Peter Hennessy called the departmental select committees the single most important clawback in terms of the relative influence of the legislature and executive since the turn of the century(1). In theory. Committee powers are only actionable if other MPs back them up and that depends on the whips. What is at stake, after a year of New Labour rule is whether these committees are going to be tolerated by the executive if, like Foreign Affairs, they get stroppy. Norman St John Stevas, getting in quickly before Margaret Thatcher realised what was afoot, set up the committee system in 1979. He aspired to nothing less than "redressing the balance of power" within the Commons(2). Some successes. An inquiry by the Defence Committee into the Westland helicopter affair. But when the Health Committee chaired by Nicholas Winterton, a Tory MP, attacked the internal market within the NHS, whips decided they had had enough internal opposition. They invented the "Winterton rule", preventing a committee chairman serving more than two parliaments.

WHIPS have at their disposal a splendid armoury of patronage, bribes and threats. From it, under John Major, they pulled baubles which had the effect of neutralising an inquiry by the Trade and Industry Committee into the Supergun affair. (The same inquiry showed how weak Commons committees are: Alan Clark, a key actor, simply refused to answer the committee's questions.) The system was so flawed that Jerry Hayes, a health committee member, even leaked a critical report to Virginia Bottomley, the Health Secretary, so that she could knock it down before publication. The Commons Privileges Committee inquired, confirmed the leak — and took no action.

"Parliament had its destiny in its own hands and it threw it away," Winterton now says.

To subvert "independent" committees, the Tories showed, you turn chairs into ministers, or even whips. The danger now, as the committees start to stretch their wings, is that the flagellants will have their way again.

Yet one committee they cannot muzzle; if MPs or the public wanted a template for effective monitoring of the executive by the House of Commons, it is surely the Public Accounts Committee, created in the 19th century. Both ministers and their top officials still fear having to appear before it: in each Whitehall department a civil servant, usually the permanent secretary, serves as accounting officer with an obligation to blow the whistle in the PAC's direction on unauthorised spending. Chaired by convention by an Opposition MP, the PAC commands the 900-strong National Audit Office, which examines accounts and asks about value for money. Through the PAC, MPs are, like members of the United States Congress, able to conduct regular, professional and thoroughgoing investigations on the public's behalf.

The model has not been lost on some Labour committee chairs, especially the "old and bold" who, resigned to having missed the boat of political preferment during Labour's wilderness years, are set to make a name for themselves as backbenchers. Bruce George, long-time Walsall MP, chairman of the Defence Committee, has drawn up a rejuvenation plan for bigger budgets, stronger powers, the capacity to conduct research, initiate debate and interrogate ministers and their officials more rigorously. It's not, he says, a bid for power but a demand for respect. Committees should not have power says Peter Hennessy, but influence. "Governments govern; Parliament does not, even though without the consent of Parliament no government can exercise power for long"(3). Reports, even from the quieter committees, such as science and technology, can serve to marshal evidence and influence opinion.

Some chairs want higher pay to reflect the responsibility of running a committee, which can take three days a week. It is as tough, according to the Tory chairman of the Agriculture Committee, Peter Luff, as being a junior minister. Giles Radice wonders whether making some Privy Councillors might reinforce their independence.

The public standing of the committees was badly damaged under the Tories and they need to raise their game before requests for extra cash look plausible. They are wildly varied in the quality of their members and output. Gerald Kaufman has been allowed to turn the Culture Committee into a personal fiefdom, a rubber stamp for his acidic hyperbole. Too many inquiries verge on the farcical. Questions get put which are merely a statement of prejudice. MPs don't follow up answers, let alone sustain a line of questioning. One member of the Culture committee once asked a question which went on for seven *minutes*. Civil servants and ministers spend hours preparing; Gordon Brown is so anxious when he appears before the Treasury Committee, he shakes. MPs however often don't bother to prepare at all.

Complaisant members make easy meat for the whips: a word in a chairman's ear about the dangers of pursuing a particular inquiry, a hint that it would be a good idea to delay publication until after the party conference. Above all the whips control committee membership, seeking to ensure there is never a majority to be difficult, as there so famously is on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Labour chairmen admit that even though they want to see committees develop as a respected alternative to government office there are some jobs they wouldn't be able to refuse. "Not many," says Giles Radice. "I have more influence as chairman of the Treasury committee than I would in most ministerial jobs."

Hard and fast evidence of committee influence on government policy is hard to find. Perhaps the Downing Street summit with the highbrow end of the Arts establishment the other day was a response to criticism from Gerald Kaufman's committee about a Government obsessed with trivia.

BUT if there are signs that the Prime Minister is taking committee reports seriously, how soon before he moves against them? Labour's leaders are not thought to be happy about the way a critic of New Labour such as Diane Abbott, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, gets propelled on to prime-time television.

Governments do not readily give executive power away. Ministers do not take up the seals of office in order to disarm their empires or provision their foes. But the Blair government has devolved power to Scotland and Wales and, in sponsoring greater freedom of official information and promising reform of Commons procedure, stoked an expectation that it could live in some new geography of power and influence between Whitehall and Westminster. Strengthening the departmental select committees ought to be part of that project. Yet such reform is not just for ministers, it speaks to the self-possession even the identity of MPs. Select committee reform depends on who they think they are.

Sources: (1) Peter Hennessy, The Hidden Wiring, Gollancz, 1995; (2) House of Commons, June 25, 1979; (3) Peter Hennessy, same reference.
Picture Research: Jane Crimmon.
Anne Perkins is a political correspondent; David Walker edits Analysis.

*Standing Order 152
Select Committees shall be appointed to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the principal government departments.
Select Committees shall have power —
a) to send for persons, papers and records;
b) to appoint special advisers;
c) to report;
d) to communicate their evidence to other committees and the Committee of Public Accounts;
e) to meet with other committees to take evidence and consider reports.

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Output slumps

Gloom in factories

Larry Elliott and Charlotte Denny

BRITISH manufacturing is officially in its first recession since John Major's administration pulled out of the Exchange Rate Mechanism, government statisticians indicated yesterday.

Ravaged by the strong pound and the crisis in Asia, output from factories fell for a second successive month in May, says the Office for National Statistics.

Sterling fell sharply on the foreign exchanges after the news, as dealers said that the Bank of England's monetary policy committee was more likely to keep interest rates on hold when it meets later this week.

Sectors particularly sensitive to the strong pound, such as textiles and clothing, face the toughest time and contributed most to the 0.4 per cent drop in manufacturing output in May.

In the latest three months, output rose 0.1 per cent, but the Office of National Statistics estimates that the annual trend is for the sector to shrink 0.5 per cent.

This is the first time that statisticians have predicted that factories are in recession since December 1992 — before the economy had had time to benefit from the cheaper pound and lower interest rates which came in the wake of Black Wednesday.

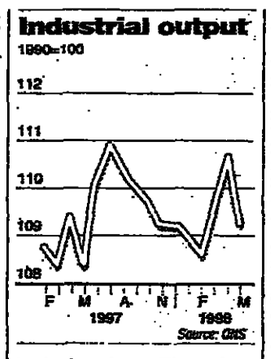
As manufacturing teeters into its fourth downturn in the past 25 years, output is less than 4 per cent higher than at the end of the Lawson boom in the second quarter of 1990, and only about 8 per cent higher than in the aftermath of the three-day week in mid-1974.

Richard Iley, of ABN Amro, said the figures were much worse than expected.

"The additional weakness in manufacturing shown by these data will further help reassure the committee that no move is necessary this month," he said.

Sterling fell two pfennigs before recovering to finish the day at DM2.97 as traders became more confident that interest rates had peaked.

But John O'Sullivan, of BT Alex Brown, warned that even yesterday's gloomy data might not stay the committee's hand on Thursday. "There is a sense from recent minutes and the May inflation report that manufacturing output data have to be totally catastrophic to convince the committee that the inflation risks are substantially lower than it has already factored in."



Overall industrial output fell 1.2 per cent in May, which the committee said was mainly because of the steep decline in energy supply as a result of an exceptionally cold April being followed by a mild May.

In sharp contrast to the industrial downturn, separate figures released yesterday showed that the financial sector is growing at its fastest rate for a year.

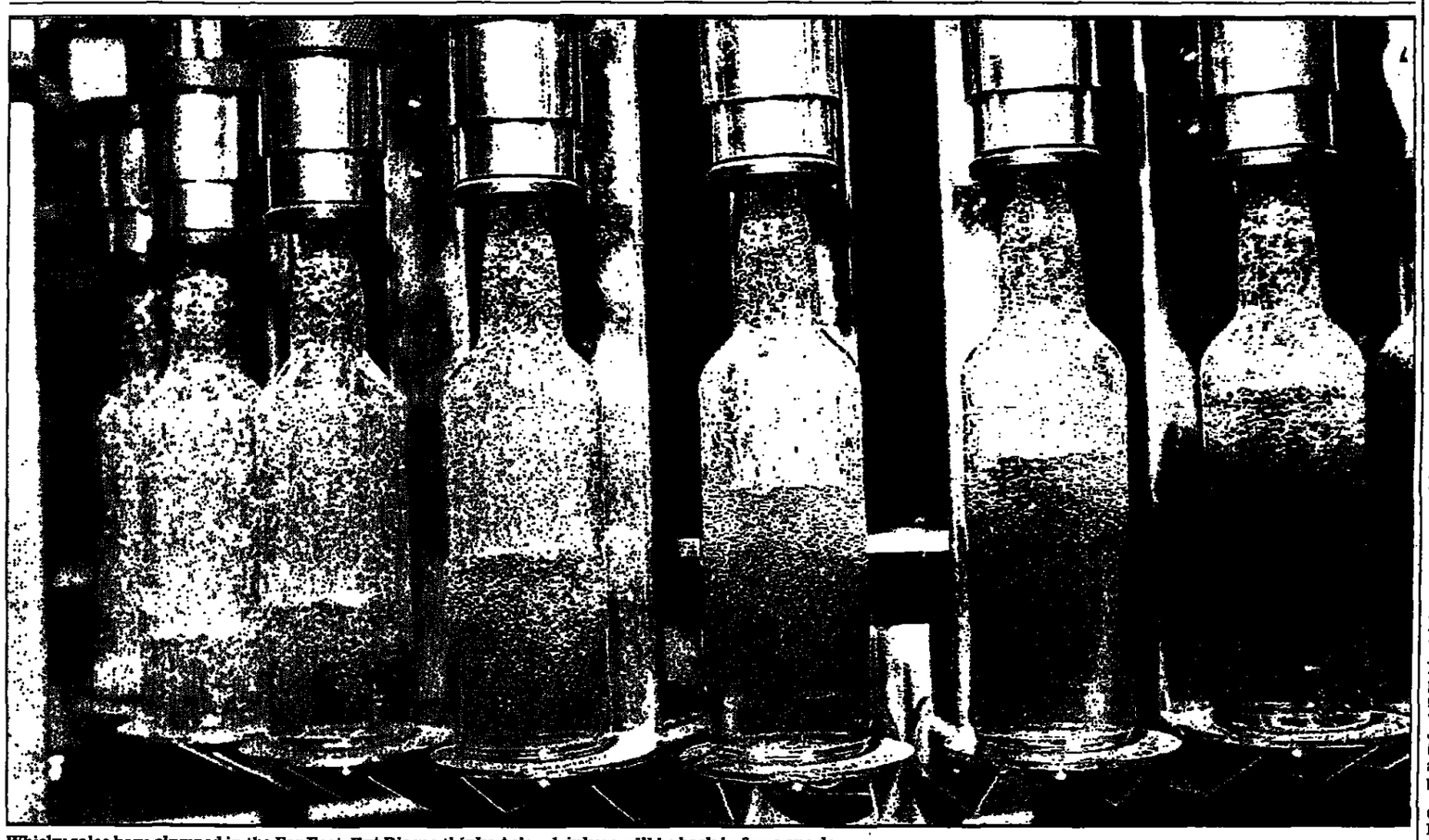
Forty-four per cent of firms reported increased activity, while only 5 per cent recorded a fall, says the latest snapshot of the sector from the Confederation of British Industry. The overall balance of 39 per cent is the highest since June last year.

The robust growth in what is one of the fastest growing areas in the service sector highlights the dilemma facing the committee.

Buoyed by strong domestic demand and with exports making up a much smaller proportion of business, companies in some parts of the services sector are still growing at a fast rate.

But analysts expect gloom in manufacturing to spread to services.

"The danger is that the psychological effect of a prolonged recession in manufacturing could turn the hoped-for soft landing for the economy into a hard one," said Simon Briscoe of Nikko Europe, a Japanese bank based in London.



Whisky sales have slumped in the Far East. But Diageo thinks Asian drinkers will be back in force one day

The three levers that are putting the brake on Britain's manufacturing industry

Diageo raises Scotch stakes

Asian crisis

Dan Atkinson

THE world's biggest whisky maker has an interesting response to a 44 per cent sales crash in the Far East. It is raising prices.

Diageo, the food and drink combine created when Guinness merged with Grand Metropolitan at the end of last year, is undaunted by the thirst-shrinking economic crisis in Asia-Pacific markets. It is spending more on advertising and marketing, and is asking whisky drinkers to pay more.

Luke Swanson, a spokesman for Diageo, said that part of the price increase was a response to devaluation of currencies such as the yen, Malaysia's ringgit and the Indonesian rupiah.

But another factor was the need "to support their [the brands'] premium position in the market". He added that Diageo was committed to stepping up advertising and marketing support for its Scotch brands for the duration of the Asian crisis, in order to be positioned for the upturn "whenever that is".

That means the economic crisis could be more expensive for Diageo than the cost of the lost sales may suggest. But the company takes the view that Asian drinkers will be back in force one day and is determined that it will be classic Diageo brands which they drink.

Diageo's stable of top Scotch names includes Johnnie Walker, J&B, White Horse, VAT 69, Bells and Black & White. Overall, 40 per cent of the 80 million cases of Scotch sold worldwide each year is accounted for by Diageo. Scotch is the world's favourite whisky: production of American bourbon is 12 million cases, eight million of which are for domestic consumption.

Furniture-maker feels squeeze

Strong pound

Charlotte Denny

DAVID Breese estimates sterling's march up the foreign exchanges in the last year and half has cost his small Lincolnshire company nearly half a million pounds.

His firm, Lloyd Loom of Spalding make woven fibre furniture from machine twisted paper using a technique developed in the 1930s. The company's products are sold in 42 countries, an achievement which won him a Queen's award for exports this year.

Exports are the mainstay of Mr Breese's business. But with the pound more than 20 per cent higher than its October 1996 level on a trade weighted basis, the company has had to cut its margins to hold prices down for foreign buyers.

"Our ability to make a profit has been destroyed by the false strength of the pound," he says. "It's devastated our business. We've gone from being profitable to a company just keeping its nose above water."

Mr Breese built the firm up from its beginnings 13 years ago, to a company which employs 100 local people with an annual turnover of £5 million. But plans to add another 350 jobs have been shelved. "Until 18 months ago we ploughed every penny of profit back into the business. We were going to expand here but will be forced to produce overseas instead."

Mr Breese says the Government doesn't seem to be interested in the impact the high pound is having on the manufacturing sector.

"What is a young company like ours supposed to do? Every job we create overseas is one which could have been created here."

MFI sales 'hit by rate rise'

Demand fall

Charlotte Denny

LAST week when MFI announced it was cutting 1,500 jobs, managing director John Randall insisted that the plans had been laid well before consumers lost enthusiasm for big purchases.

But the downturn in domestic demand has clearly affected the furniture manufacturing group's short-term outlook. Mr Randall says that slimming down its products and concentrating on kitchens and bedrooms, will help MFI weather "not helpful" trading conditions ahead.

Mr Randall is clear why consumers have lost interest in household goods. "Rising interest rates. The slowdown in sales dates from January when the three million households with annualised mortgages received bills some 25 per cent higher."

High-street spending while still holding up overall has fallen sharply in the consumer durables area since the turn of the year. Last year sales were boosted by the windfalls from the demutualised building societies.

But Mr Randall says the increase in sales wasn't anything like what the market expected. "It added a bit of froth on top but that has gone now." If there is evidence that interest rates have peaked, he expects consumers' confidence will return.

MFI sells two out of every five British kitchens and makes most of them in the UK. Mr Randall points out that the strength of sterling has had some positive features for his firm. "We are benefiting from lower material prices."

The company has a division in France and expects the recovery in that country to increase sales volumes and compensate for the falling margins caused by the rise of the pound.

Swiss hit back at Holocaust campaign

ATTEMPTS by the US to help the families of Holocaust victims get back the assets they deposited with Swiss banks hit another hurdle yesterday when the shareholders of Credit Suisse threatened to sue New York authorities for damage inflicted on the bank's reputation, *writes Jill Treanor*.

Marc Fessler, a Zurich-based investment adviser, told Bloomberg news agency that he would instruct a law firm to sue New York City and New York State unless they dropped sanctions against the bank and UBS, its larger rival.

The two local authorities imposed sanctions on the banks last week, including barring short-term investment with them and stopping them selling state and city debt unless they reached a settlement with Jewish groups by September 1.

The local authorities decided to re-impose the sanctions, which were lifted last year, after talks on a global settlement between Jewish groups and the Swiss banks broke down.

The bankers offered to pay a maximum of $600 million to settle the claims, which the Jewish leaders dismissed as "insulting" and proposed a $1.5 billion deal.

Mr Fessler said he had the backing of four of his clients and another investor, who together own 20,000 Credit Suisse shares, for his action.

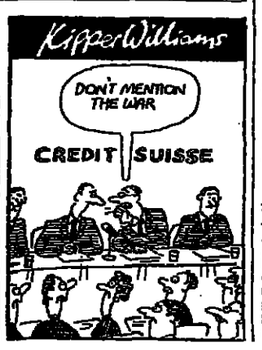
"The moment a company I'm a shareholder of gets blackmailed, I want to defend myself," Mr Fessler said, adding that his Bern-based lawyers believed he had a strong case.

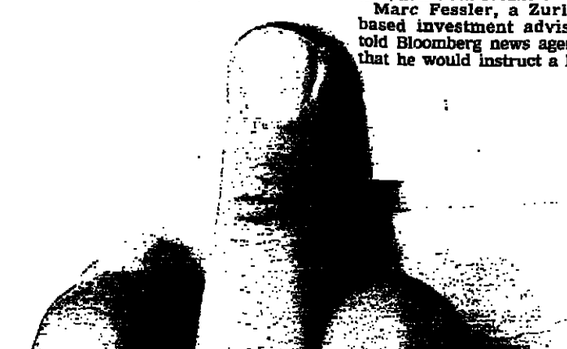
He would probably mount his challenge before September 1, when the first sanctions take effect.

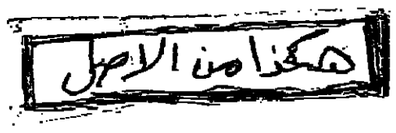
If the impasse in negotiations continues, the sanctions will become increasingly stringent and by January 1, 1999 would affect all Swiss companies.

When the sanctions were announced the Swiss government reacted furiously, and said it would support any legal action taken by Swiss companies.

It threatened to complain to the World Trade Organisation, which is responsible for global trading regulations.







Notebook

Wobbly economy set for bad fall



Alex Brummer

EVERYONE, including the markets, appears to be feigning shock that the UK economy is cooling so rapidly. This should, however, not come as a surprise. The Treasury's official forecast, updated last month for the new fiscal strategy report, predicts growth declining from 3 per cent last year to 1.75 per cent in the 1998/99 fiscal year.

That seems to be coming about. The effect of the strong pound on the manufacturing sector is serious, as the latest industrial production figures show. But consumer confidence is also sinking fast, as a response to rising interest rates, with the Bank of England's key repo rate at 7.5 per cent.

The speed with which the economy is coming back to Earth is shown in the industrial output figures. Overall output is down 1.2 per cent and manufacturing is weaker than expected and stagnating. Engineering and textile industries seem to be suffering most.

The big unknown in the Treasury's forecast, as outlined in the fiscal report, is the effects of "market volatility in Asia and Russia" which could be potentially much more serious for the domestic economic than has been envisaged. The East Asian economies show no signs of improving. Added to this has been the uncertainty in Russia, where the IMF is seeking to stitch together a new rescue plan, and Japan. Ryutaro Hashimoto, Japan's prime minister, is doing nothing to help settle the scene there with his wavering over long-term tax reforms.

The real question for the Bank of England's monetary policy committee, when it meets later this week, is whether the strong pound, the June interest rate rise and the deepening uncertainties, are enough to ease upward pressure in earnings.

Some forecasters, like the Centre for Economics and Business Research, have revised the notion of stagflation, the combination of slowdown and rising inflation. But that appears an unlikely scenario over anything but the very short term. If the committee is convinced that there has not been a significant easing of policy, as a result of the Government's new fiscal strategy, it is reasonable to expect no change in base rates: the world is too uncertain a place.

Tomkins focus

THE Hanson satellite which has remained most intact during the last two decades, despite the anti-conglomerate trend, has been Tomkins. Rather than going for a full scale demerger, in the manner of the old master Lord Hanson himself, his boastful pupil Greg Hutchings has relied upon a winnowing process and in-fill acquisitions to make sense of a company which has little coherence, with a mix of businesses ranging from guns to bread.

For a time Tomkins was extremely unfashionable like all conglomerates, but now that Hutchings has learnt the language of the late nineties, with much talk of focus, the shares in his group have been playing catch-up with the rest of the stock market.

The concentration on four sectors, construction, food manufacturing, industrial engineering and professional and leisure (in which hand guns fall) could soon be down to three as a buyer is sought for the latter business where profits have been uneven and the ethics problematical. After 15-years Hutchings is learning to navigate the riptides.

He has also become the voice of caution. Surplus cash has been used to buy back shares. Although the group remains on the lookout for allied businesses, to add to those it already controls, it is clearly not impressed by the fashion for gearing-up. Indeed, there are vague hints that it might be dangerous. Sensible sentiments as the Anglo-Saxon economies start to feel the Asian blasts.

Trading places

IRRESPECTIVE of official moves by the London Stock Exchange, the leading stockbrokers in the City have been rapidly preparing themselves for the euro from January 1, 1999.

The more sensible houses are determined not to be in the same position as the old Smith New Court after the start of screen-based trading, as the only broking house still making a market on the floor of the Stock Exchange when everyone else had moved on to screens.

In recent months there has been endless speculation about alliances among the world's leading bourses. The US Nasdaq exchange, which is fiercely ambitious, has been working hard at forging an alliance with Deutsche Börse, of Germany. Meanwhile, in London, Liffe, the futures and options market, has been engaged in rapid reforms intended to keep itself competitive with the newly linked European futures markets, Deutsche Termin Börse, in Germany, and the Matif in France. All of this comes as various product providers, including Commerzbank of Germany, have sought to develop their own European indices.

Clearly, it is important for the City that the London Stock Exchange, as Europe's senior and most liquid market, is not left out of these developments. A strategic alliance with Deutsche Börse would allow it to remain a significant participant in the euro game and eliminate risks to which Liffe has been exposed by staying outside Europe's screen-based futures net.

Dye resurrects old City name

Jill Treanor

PDFM, the controversial fund management group run by Tony Dye, is raising its profile and advertising its new name — Phillips & Drew — amid speculation that it will be spun off from its newly merged parent, UBS.

PDFM has re-adopted the old City name of Phillips & Drew as a result of the merger of its parent company, Union Bank of Switzerland, with Swiss Bank Corporation.

"After being PDFM for the last five years, this July we return to the name by which you know us best — Phillips & Drew," yesterday's half-page advertisement in the Financial Times read.

The Phillips & Drew name was dropped after the firm was bought by UBS.

Speculation is rife that Mr Dye will find it hard to work with Gary Brinson, the Chicago-based fund manager who runs the merged bank's asset management operation. The City believes that Mr Dye may mount a management buy-out or sell the business to another firm.

The advertisement emphasised Phillips & Drew's identity, which is associated with a mistaken decision by Mr Dye's more than two years ago. He pulled out of stocks, missing out on the bull run which continues today.

Unabashed, Phillips & Drew trumpeted its performance in the advertisement, saying it had been in the top quartile for a decade.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.607	Germany 2.9015	Malaysia 6.92	Singapore 2.76
Austria 20.45	Greece 485.46	Malta 0.63	South Africa 10.73
Belgium 59.98	Hong Kong 12.37	Netherlands 3.2615	Spain 245.13
Canada 2.34	India 89.94	New Zealand 3.11	Sweden 13.02
Cyprus 0.85	Ireland 1.1452	Norway 12.41	Switzerland 2.447
Denmark 11.14	Israel 6.05	Portugal 295.61	Turkey 429,720
Finland 8.92	Italy 2,872	Saudi Arabia 6.06	USA 1.5978
France 9.728			

Supplied by NatWest (excluding rupee, shekel and dollar)

هكذا من الاصل

Continent's most powerful operators join forces as London brokers fear missing out on euro trading

Exchange to tie with German bourse

Alex Brummer and Jill Treanor

THE London Stock Exchange and Deutsche Börse, of Frankfurt, are *today* expected to launch a new era of strategic co-operation before the launch of the euro on January 1 next year.

The two exchanges, which until have been seen as rivals for business in euro equites, have scheduled a joint announcement at the Savoy Hotel in London.

It is understood that the strategic link between the exchanges, the two most powerful in Europe, initially will not involve equity or ownership links between London and Frankfurt which have different ownership structures and governance. Nevertheless, the coming together of the two markets demonstrates the determination of London to remain the key participant in equity trading after the launch of the euro.

The possibility of joint ventures between the London Stock Exchange, the largest and most liquid in Europe, and Deutsche Börse, follows efforts by US and Continental stock and futures markets to build new alliances for the euro era.

In recent months Deutsche Börse has held talks with New York's Nasdaq market which has been anxious to increase its European presence. There also has been an effort to replicate the Nasdaq market in Europe, with the small operation of the Easdaq exchange in Brussels. Leading London stockbrokers have become increasing concerned that the London Stock Exchange could be sidelined after the launch of the euro, even though the London plans to offer euro dealing, pricing and settlement facilities. Stockbrokers are determined that the London Stock Exchange must not find itself in the same position as Liffe, the London futures and options market, which has been struggling in recent months to catch up with European counterparts winning back business through screen-based trading and linked systems in Frankfurt and Paris.

'It makes sense for London and Frankfurt to work this out together so that there is a European-wide standard'

Liffe has been belatedly forced to switch trading systems from open-outcry to screen-based trading and to abolish its memberships structure in favour of more corporate ownership and a stronger profit motive. Concerns remain, however, that it will not have the software in place to compete with European futures markets in time for euro trading.

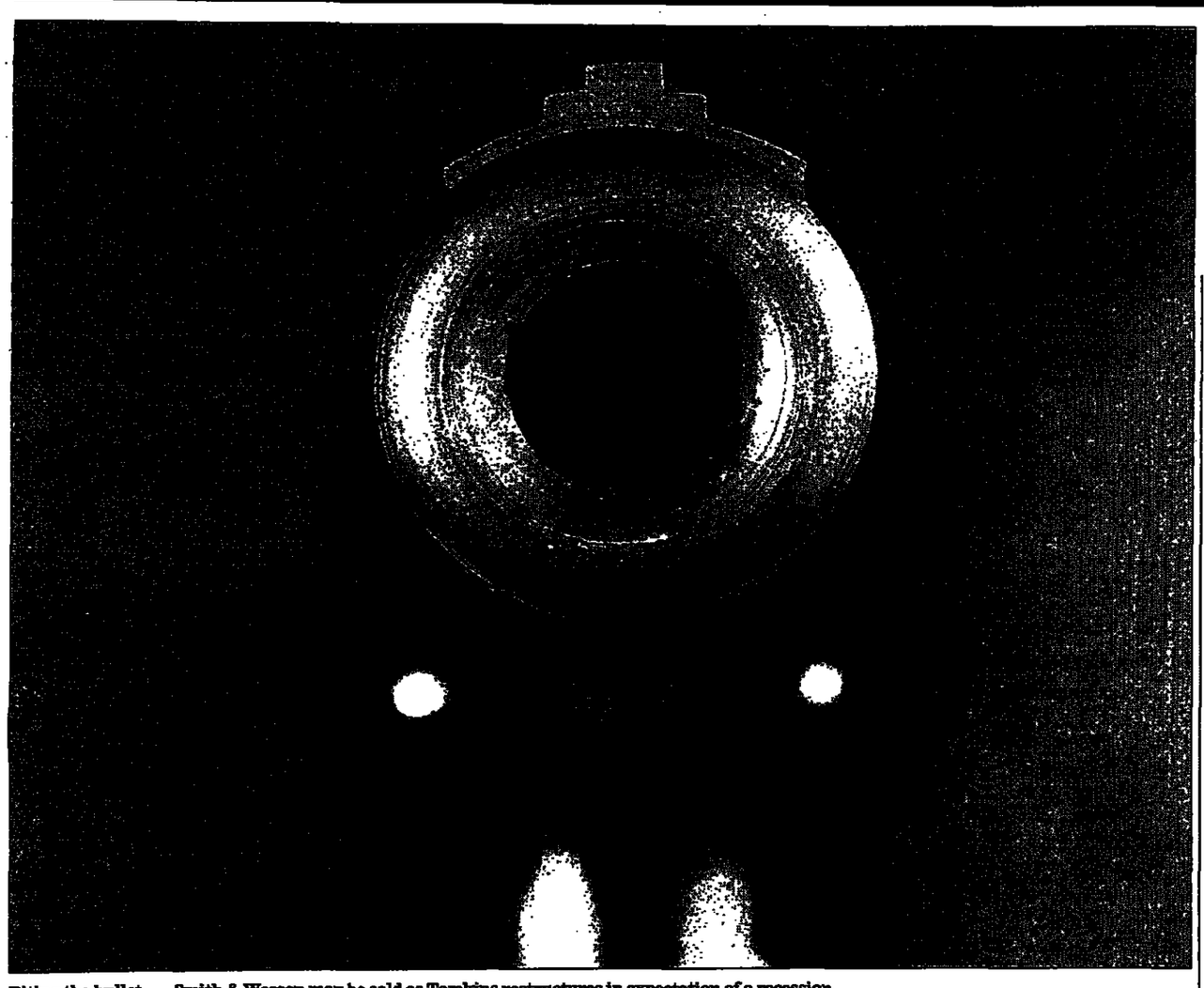
Leading London firms believe that an essential factor for the City to maintain its position as the most important equity trading centre in Europe is compatibility between its new order-driven SETS trading system and the CREST settlement system. There is also a belief that the euro indexes being built up in London, such as the FTSE Eurotop 100 and the FTSE 300, could be overtaken. "There has been proliferation of European index brands," one senior stockbroker said last night.

"It would make sense if London and Frankfurt attempted to work this out together so that there is a European-wide standard," he added.

Individual institutions in Europe, such as Commerzbank, have been developing European-wide funds and indexes in a effort to get ahead of competitors. The need for unified indexes, which offer uniform trading standards across Europe, is particularly important given the spread of derivatives trading which is often based around stock indexes. Fund managers also have been looking for ways to establish European-wide benchmarks which track the largest companies across Europe.

Only last month GEC, of Britain, and Alcatel, of France, decided to spin-off Alstom, the power group, on the Paris market to ensure that it had a euro quote and was included in the any new European investment funds.

Credit warning



Biting the bullet . . . Smith & Wesson may be sold as Tomkins restructures in expectation of a recession

Attack on reckless borrowing

Roger Cowe

GREG Hutchings, chairman of the food and engineering group Tomkins, warned yesterday that British companies were being reckless in pushing up borrowings ahead of a recession.

"I am sure there will be a recession in the next five years and I don't want to be overstretched. If you go into a recession highly geared, it's tough. I want our capital structure to be effective but not reckless," he said, predicting that high debt levels would create problems for companies most exposed to falling demand and the high pound.

"I think things will change dramatically over the next six months. With the Asian crisis and the high pound, cash flows are drying up and there have been lots of profit warnings."

Tomkins, whose brands range from Hovis to Smith & Wesson guns, has refused to follow the fashion of "gearing up" with extra debt despite the potential benefits for shareholders in substituting loans for share capital.

It has debts of £150 million, about 15 per cent of its capital, which is Mr Hutchings's target level. "An effective capital structure means one from which you can move. If we go into recession I don't want to be overstretched, then if the stock market goes down we will be able to take some opportunities."

Despite this caution, the group spent £741 million last year on 15 acquisitions, including six Spillers flour mills. It also spent £88 million to buy back shares and announced yesterday that shareholders would be asked to approve further buy-back powers at the annual meeting.

Last year profits reached £500 million for the first time — a 16 per cent increase on the previous year.

The group has attempted to escape the unfashionable "conglomerate" tag by reorganising into three broad divisions. The largest comprises the food manufacturing operations based on Rank Hovis McDougall, which had sales last year of £1.8 billion. Engineering sales reached £1.5 billion, while components for the construction industry produced £1.2 billion.

The reorganisation leaves the threat of disposal hanging over Smith & Wesson, along with garden and leisure companies. A decision will be made in the next 18 months.

Mr Hutchings said the group's strong finances and balance of interests would help cope with tough conditions, while there was still scope for acquisitions in the three main business areas.

Bullish banks told to get real

Jill Treanor

MANY banks are taking risks that could lead to collapse if the world economy slows and stock markets fall in value, a report from a think-tank says today.

The report, Banking Banana Skins, is based on the views of almost 200 bankers, regulators and analysts. It says a crash on Wall Street is the bankers' biggest fear.

The Centre for the Study of Financial Innovation warns that banks in the the competitive British market will be particularly vulnerable to the end of the bull run.

The report quotes Tony Davies, director of group risk management at Lloyds TSB, as seeing the current benign economic environment creating "an increased risk appetite with a repetition of the very aggressive transactions that characterised the late 1980s".

A respondent from the building society sector — where lending criteria for mortgages appear to be less stringent — expressed concern about "irrational actions based on a belief that current benign business conditions will continue forever".

Investment bankers are worried, too. The chairman of one London merchant bank bemoaned "the institutionalised belief that good trading markets will continue for some time".

Overall, tougher market conditions combined with the expensive race to install new technology to beat the millennium bug and prepare for Europe's single currency, are sending "loud and clear" alarm bells, the report says.

Costs, particularly those associated with technology, are seen as out of control; one fund manager said expenditure in the securities business "assumes that the global bull market rolls on".

The report also predicts that merger mania in the banking sector will bring chaos, with the resulting groups too big to manage and riddled with culture clashes among their de-motivated staff.

MacKenzie snares Talk

Chris Barrie and Simon Beavis

KELVIN MacKenzie, former editor of the Sun and the man widely credited with turning round the Mirror, was last night set to take on the radio industry as his consortium emerged as the only viable bidder for Talk Radio.

A rival bid for Talk, the national radio station controlled by Luxembourg broadcaster CLT-Ufa, collapsed last night after Talk's management failed to agree with backers on an increase to their rival offer.

The management consortium, led by managing director Paul Robinson and backed by the Guardian Media Group and United News and Media, had bid £20 million for Talk.

By contrast Mr MacKenzie's consortium, including Rupert Murdoch's News International and venture group MVI, had offered £25 million and were on the brink of securing a period of exclusivity in the run-up to signing a deal. The setback for the MBO leaves CLT-Ufa negotiating effectively with just Mr MacKenzie's consortium.

It was unclear last night if the MBO team would formally withdraw, but observers were discounting its chances of succeeding, given the difference in bid and the fact that both bids are in cash.

The Luxembourg group is selling its 62.3 per cent stake to raise cash for investment in digital television, mainly in Germany. MVI already holds a 35 per cent stake in Talk, with remaining shares held by Radio Investments.

Lehman Brothers, representing CLT-Ufa, declined to comment. However, the bank is known to have sought £38 million for Talk after a recent spate of radio station sales saw bidders paying hefty prices.

Talk lost £10 million on £3.7 million turnover last year, but is understood to be benefiting from its World Cup coverage which is on track to more than double sales to £7.5 million. Mr MacKenzie is understood to feel that this performance can be maintained beyond the World Cup.

Analysts have been divided about Rupert Murdoch's motives for backing the bid by his former lieutenant for Talk by taking a 20 per cent stake in Mr MacKenzie's consortium.

Some saw it as a sly and relatively inexpensive way to dislodge Mr MacKenzie from the Mirror Group at a time when there were signs that the Mirror titles were being given a lift. Others believe the News Corp chief has real ambitions to be a radio player.

News in brief

Defence review may mean job cuts

BRITAIN's armoured vehicle-makers could be forced to cut capacity a result of the defence review, industry executives said. Defence Secretary George Robertson will start a bidding war for contracts of £1.5 billion for 400 reconnaissance vehicles when he publishes the review tomorrow. — *David Gow*

Chiroscience pay-off

DIAGNOSTICS group Chiroscience reached an agreement with Nowell Stebbing, its former chief, over a writ he issued against it in 1996. Dr Stebbing was paid £101,000 compensation when he quit, but a dispute arose over share options. Chiroscience is to pay Dr Stebbing £3.25 million. — *Ian King*

Pace loses £12m

PACE Micro Technology, the decoder firm, made a £12 million loss on £184 million turnover last year. The loss was brushed aside by chief executive Malcolm Miller, who said Pace was well positioned for digital TV's launch. — *Chris Barrie*

Securicor acquisition

SECURICOR'S parcel-carrying subsidiary, Securicor Omega Express, said it acquired Hays Express Services, the parcels business of Hays Commercial Services, for £16.7 million in cash.

Record mis-selling fines

A RECORD 40 firms have been fined a total of £157,000 for delays in compensating victims of the £11 billion pensions mis-selling scandal. Treasury minister Helen Liddell today will order firms to do better or face the consequences. — *Rupert Jones*

Matthew Clark squeezed

MATTHEW Clark, the drinks group which owns Gaymers and Taunton Cider, warned that its brands were still fighting to protect their market share. The group announced a fall in full-year pre-tax profits from £40.6 million to £35.8 million. Shares advanced 3p to 184p. — *Ian King*

Bankruptcies could bring return of state-run rail routes

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

THE Government will take over the routes of rail companies that go bankrupt in the first move which could return part of the industry to the public sector, Whitehall sources confirmed last night.

The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, has decided that the Government's proposed strategic rail authority will assume responsibility for bankrupt routes.

He will outline the role of the authority, dubbed "son of British Rail", in his transport white paper later this month. The plan is to introduce a short bill in the next parliamentary session so the SRA can be in place by next year.

Whitehall sources stressed that government takeover of bankrupt companies would not be the prelude to renationalisation of the industry. If a suitable private operator came forward, it would be given proper consideration.

One said: "This is not a return to the bad old days. We have to build on what we have inherited and make sure the public is getting the best deal, which is not happening at the moment."

None of the 25 train operating companies has encountered financial difficulties, although there are reports that some of the smaller companies are beginning to cut back by not replacing management. Wales and the West, which serves the West Country and South Wales, has reduced services because it has insufficient drivers, and it will face severe financial penalties.

Rural routes, where the population is small, the government subsidy high and financial returns frugal, are most vulnerable. When the franchises were awarded, a number of the successful companies made over-ambitious bids.

The SRA will be the industry's strategic arm. It will make decisions about the rail franchises, which are due for renewal in less than five years, and will be able to intervene if it thinks the industry is failing to perform.

At present, the rail franchise director, John O'Brien, is supposed to vet each private operator. If one collapses, he can introduce a new company or run the business himself. His office confirmed yesterday that several "shelf companies" were ready in case of an emergency. They would be run largely by former British Rail officials.

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VOLVO ADVANTAGE	
S40 1.8i (125 BHP) SE (ON THE ROAD)	ON THE ROAD PRICE £17,895.00
	CASH DEPOSIT £5,700.00
	BALANCE £11,605.00
APR 8.7%	36 MONTHLY PAYMENTS OF* £198.40
	OPTIONAL FINAL PURCHASE PAYMENT/GMFV** £6,730.57
	CHARGE FOR CREDIT £2,268.13
	TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE £19,873.13

* A credit facility fee of £70 is added to the first payment. ** The Optional Final Purchase Payment is a sum equal to the GMFV (Guaranteed Minimum End Value). All Purchase Fee payable with the final rental.

Thanks to direct fuel injection, the Volvo S40 1.8i (125 bhp) SE uses up to 15% less petrol than comparable engines† And at £199 per month you'll be using cash sparingly too. The Volvo S40 1.8i (125 bhp) SE from £17,305 on the road. Call 0800 11 40 40 for further details.

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Racing

Graham Rock expects a smart performance from Geoff Wragg's consistent five-year-old at Newmarket

Germano has winning glow

HEALTHY horses are the key to a successful season for any trainer, and Geoff Wragg has struggled so far this year. But one horse from his string to have run consistently well is Germano (3.40), who has a good chance to land the Princess Of Wales's Stakes (3.40) at Newmarket today.

A smooth winner of the Gordon Richards Stakes at Sandown on his reappearance, Germano was slightly disappointing on a return visit to the course for the Brigadier Gerard Stakes, finishing third to Insatiable and Garuda, four lengths behind the runner-up, who meets the selection on identical terms.

Stepped up to a mile and a half for the Hardwicke Stakes at Royal Ascot, Germano ran one of the best races of his career in finishing runner-up to Posidonas, beaten half a length, and if he can reproduce that performance he should take his revenge on Garuda, who subsequently finished fifth to Ungaro in the Gran Premio di Milano.

Single Empire, winner of the Derby Italiano last year, makes his seasonal reappearance and is set to concede weight all round, while Sabadilla was runner-up to Greek Palace in the Bessborough Stakes, and makes his first venture into Pattern company.

A bigger danger could be Eaton Square, unbeaten in minor races at Newbury and Goodwood, but Henry Cecil's promising three-year-old faces much more formidable opposition here.

Pipalong (3.05) was outpaced by Bint Allayl in the closing stages of the Queen Mary Stakes. Previously successful at Ripon and York, she can pick up the winning thread in the Charles Heidsieck Champagne Cherry Hinton Stakes (3.05), provided she acts on this faster ground.

David Loder saddles both Blue Melody, who won on her debut at Leicester, and Spirit Willing, who was impressive when winning by seven lengths at Ascot.

Spirit Willing should be the better of the pair, but Pipalong has superior form and Tim Easterby's filly should not be troubled by a sixth furlong.

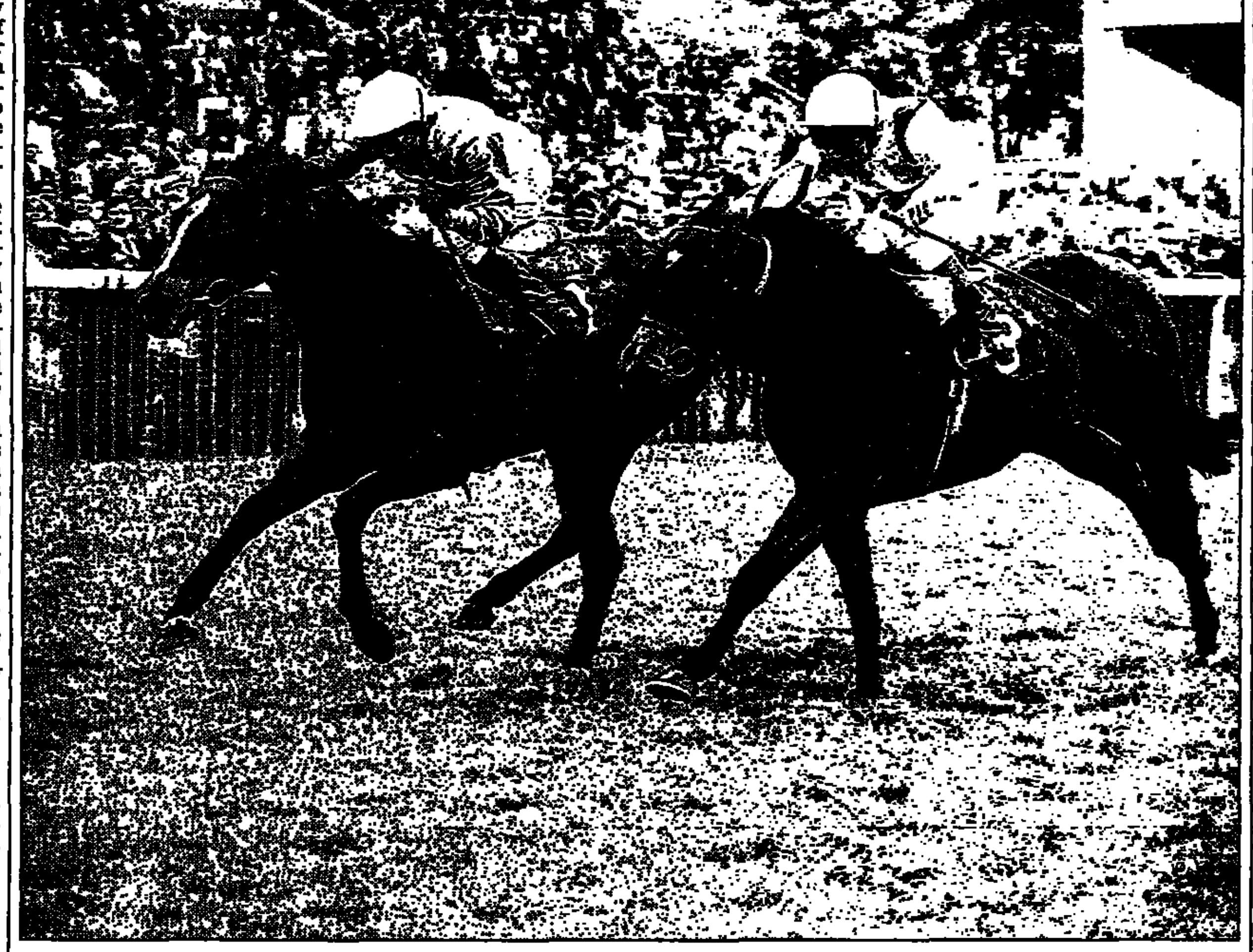
Another Ascot failure, Misbah (4.10), is worth an interest in the Lincoln Mild Cigars Rated Stakes. Ben Hanbury's colt finished ninth behind Plan-B in the Britannia Stakes, beaten about three lengths, having previously divided Sharp Play and Tracking in a conditions event at Thirsk.

The form of the Britannia is working out well and he will take some beating, despite being dropped back to six furlongs.

Lynda Ramsden has several good chances at Pontefract. Her daughter, Emma, might ride the winner of the Hyde Sporting Promotions Ladies Handicap aboard Shalyah (2.20) and while Courtesan (2.50) has to concede weight to the field in the Dianne Nursery, the Doncaster winner has more scope than her rivals.

Mouche (5.00) has been unlucky in her recent races over sprint distances and attempts a mile in the King Richard III Fillies' Handicap. If she stays, she should have the measure of some moderate rivals and looks a worthy nap.

Kieren Fallon, who rode for the Ramsdens before joining Henry Cecil last year, has failed in his appeal against the three-day ban he was given by the stewards for his riding of Memorise in the Curragh Cup nine days ago. His suspension begins tomorrow.



Cherry ripe . . . Pipalong (left), the favourite for the Cherry Hinton, defeats Bint Allayl at York PHOTOGRAPH: ALEC RUSSELL

Prescott ready for York assault

Graham Rock

PASTERNAK, who carries the colours of your correspondent, is a warm favourite for the John Smith's Cup at York on Saturday, priced from 7-2 with Ladbrokes and Hill's to 11-4 with Coral and the Tote.

Given his success in the race last year and his subsequent triumph in the Cambridgeshire, the men who make the odds are taking no chances, despite him being raised 9lb for his victory at Newmarket.

What can I tell you? He is well. A tentative plan to run in the Lincoln was abandoned early in March, and then Sir Mark Prescott's team began to cough. He was not ready for the Hunt Cup, and the big race of the weekend is his natural target.

Never a flashy worker at home, he has pleased in his recent exercise on Newmarket Heath. He would not want either extreme of going, but if the ground were good and the pace were strong, he would have a favourite's chance.

Emerald Heights, runner-up to Double Classic in the King George V Handicap at Royal Ascot, is second in the ante-post market, a best-priced 9-1 with Coral, while the promising three-year-olds Muhib (10-1 Coral and Ladbrokes) and Porto Foricas (16-1 Hill's) are relatively unexposed.

The Royal Hunt Cup winner Refuse To Lose is 14-1 generally, but those looking to oppose Pasternak might consider the French challenger Punishment (16-1 Tote), who finished fast to divide Yavana's Pace and Greek Palace in the Hong Kong Jockey Club Trophy at Sandown.

Pontefract card

	GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.20	Shalyah	Gruvelair Lad
2.50	Courtesan	Golden Reef
3.20	Glenmead	Wadi
3.55	Time To Tango	Ray Of Sunshine (nap)
4.25	Echelle Musicale	Echelle Musicale
5.00	Mouche (nap)	Mouche
5.30	Howies Choice	Desert Fighter

Left-handed, undulating course of 2m with run-in of just over 2f. Premium on stamina
Going: Good to firm ★ Denotes blinkers ● Top form rating
Draw: Low numbers favoured up to one mile
Seven day winners: 3.55 Ray Of Sunshine
Blinkered first time: 5.30 Black Weasel. Visored: None
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

2.20 HYDE SPORTING PROMOTIONS LADIES HANDICAP
1m 2f £3,106 (16 declared)

1 (16)	351082	Wakeful Beach (11) (D) G L Moore 7-11-7	Jane Moore	80
2 (6)	403-31	Tapatch (6) (CD) M W Easterby 10-10-6	Miss S Brotherton (7) ★	86
3 (14)	1000-4	Bold Top (8) (C) [illegible] 6-10-5	Miss P Robson	84
4 (13)	4000-6	Cool Mystery (89) [illegible] 3-10-4	Diana J Jones	83
5 (3)	456302	Zuryaf (8) B Meehan 3-10-2	Jane Allison ★	80
6 (4)	0-0402	Shalyah (10) (BF) Mrs J Ramsden 3-10-1	Miss E Ramsden	82
7 (11)	05-030	Tajar (8) T Keddy 6-10-1	Hayley Keddy	83
8 (15)	500000	Rochelle (17) S Knight 5-10-0	Miss K Di Marte (7)	—
9 (7)	7000-4	Cora Hill (20) M D Darby 4-9-13	Mrs S Bosley	84
10 (2)	453-00	Orinoco Venture (143) [illegible] 7-9-10	Sheila Potts (7)	—
11 (8)	30045-	Don't Drop Bombs (11) (D) H McCabe 9-9-7	Miss J Feilden	80
12 (1)	0-40/0	Zahran (10) J Bradley 7-9-5	C Bryan (5)	—
13 (10)	611060	Gruvelair Lad (20) S Bowring 4-9-5	Miss M Morris (3) ● 88	
14 (9)	000-36	Petite Park (17) W G M Turner 4-9-3	Miss C Stretton (7)	—
15 (13)	-0/3004	Stolen Music (6) R Barr 4-9-3	Miss A Deniel (3)	86
16 (5)	000047	Comic Hill (20) (D) J Pearce 7-9-3	Lydia Pearce	87

Betting: 4-1 Shalyah, 5-1 Tapatch, 7-1 Wakeful Beach, Zuryaf, Gruvelair Lad, 8-1 Tajar, 10-1 [illegible]

2.50 DIANNE NURSERY HANDICAP 2YO
6f £3,184 (9 declared)

1 (4)	21	Courtesan (31) (D) Mrs J Ramsden 9-7	J Fortune	80
2 (9)	402011	Sweet As A Nut (20) C Dwyer 9-6	F Lynch	85
3 (1)	41102	Bewdley Monkey (16) (D) J Berry 9-5	J Carroll	87
4 (8)	2241	College Music (64) M Britain 9-1	G Carter	83
5 (7)	364	So Willing (26) M Dods 9-0	Dale Gibson	86
6 (3)	02250	Golden Reef (13) R Hollinshead 9-0	A McCarthy (3) ● 90	
7 (2)	10	Bumbog (28) C Dwyer 8-12	J Goldbad (7)	85
8 (5)	01	Sunset Lady (26) (D) P Haslam 8-6	C Lowther	82
9 (6)	0012	Miss Take (11) (D) P Evans 8-0	J F Egan ★	84

Betting: 9-4 Courtesan, 3-1 Bewdley Monkey, 13-2 College Music, 9-1 Sweet As A Nut, 10-1 Golden Reef, Bumbog, 12-1 So Willing, Sunset Lady, 14-1 Miss Take

3.20 BRADLEY MAIDEN STAKES
1m 2f £3,631 (12 declared)

1 (11)		Billy Moonshine (J127) G L Moore 6-9-7	Candy Morris	—
2 (7)	20	Daniel Deronda (22) P Harris 4-9-7	C Lowther	—
3 (4)	63/	Sartanzo (882) T Dunnetty 4-9-2	P Fessey	—
4 (5)	06	Genetic (82) P Walwyn 3-8-10	K Darley	82
5 (12)	0	Glenmead (18) A Streeter 2-8-10	J Carroll	87
6 (8)	0-046	Trojan Wolf (24) M Tompkins 3-8-10	D Biggs	88
7 (1)	33 0	Wadi (18) H Cecil 3-8-10	W Ryan ● 90	
8 (6)	0-6	Wayne Lukas (18) H Cecil 3-8-10	A McGlone	86
9 (3)	00	Kirby Princess (21) R Fahey 3-8-5	R Winston (5)	—
10 (2)	35	Moulin Rouge (36) E Dunlop 3-8-5	J Fortune	86
11 (9)	30	Rose Of Shuaib (22) L Cumani 3-8-5	R French	80
12 (10)	60	Zetaab (18) M Jarvis 3-8-5	G Carter	86

Betting: 5-2 Wadi, 4-1 Moulin Rouge, 9-2 Rose Of Shuaib, 9-1 Glenmead, Zetaab, 10-1 Trojan Wolf, 12-1 Wayne Lukas

3.55 ST. GILES HANDICAP (CLASS D)
6f £5,618 (15 declared)

1 (8)	0-0000	Willi (6) (D) R Ingram 5-9-13	D O'Donohoe	87
2 (3)	001245	Young Bigwig (9) (D) D Chapman 4-9-12	A Culhane	87
3 (9)	032510	Broughtons Turmoil (9) B Wilson 9-9-11	O Sweeney	88
4 (5)	0-0511	Ray Of Sunshine (8) (7lb ex) (D) Mrs J Ramsden 3-9-11	J Fortune ● 90	
5 (12)	006130	Bowlers Boy (16) (CD) J J Quinn 5-9-9	J Carroll	88
6 (15)	00-020	Fairy Prince (15) (CD) Mrs A King 5-9-5	F Lynch	85
7 (6)	40-362	Angel Hill (8) R Fahey 3-9-3	R Winston (5)	86
8 (4)	002001	Demolition Jo (15) (D) P Evans 3-9-2	J F Egan ★	83
9 (10)	40-050	French Grit (12) (CD) M Dods 6-9-1	J Weaver	87
10 (2)	052040	Carlton (9) (D) S Gollings 4-8-0	C Lowther	86
11 (7)	002206	Mytilene Mistake (9) R Hodges 5-8-13	K Darley	88
12 (1)	060-00	Jubrant Jake (9) (D) L Alston 6-8-8	W Supple	—
13 (11)	062023	Time To Tango (4) (BF) G M Moore 5-8-4	G Duffield	87
14 (13)	0-0030	Morenti (10) (D) J Bradley 5-8-1	R Ffrench	85
15 (14)	0000-0	Loch-Marie Lady (3) K Hogg 4-7-10	P Fessey	84

Betting: 9-2 Ray Of Sunshine, 6-1 Young Bigwig, 7-1 Broughtons Turmoil, Angel Hill, 8-1 Demolition Jo, Mytilene Mistake, 12-1 Fairy Prince, Time To Tango

4.25 TANSHELF MAIDEN STAKES
1m 4f £3,599 (8 declared)

1 (6)		The Bat (J118) A Jarvis 5-9-7	D Sweeney	—
2 (7)	6/	Bandra Star (384) Mrs M Reveley 8-9-2	A Culhane	—
3 (1)	02	Brigade Charge (8) L Cumani 3-8-8	R Ffrench	88
4 (4)	50	Count de Money (36) A Jarvis 3-8-8	J F Egan	—
5 (8)		Pendant H Cecil 3-8-8	A McGlone	—
6 (2)	20	Profiler (28) H Cecil 3-8-8	W Ryan	87
7 (3)	0-	Southern-Be-George (288) W G M Turner 3-8-8	Dean McKeown	—
8 (5)	53	Echelle Musicale (46) E Dunlop 3-8-3	G Carter ● 90	

Betting: 2-1 Echelle Musicale, 5-2 Profiler, 3-1 Brigade Charge, 5-1 Pendant, 16-1 Bandra Star

5.00 KING RICHARD III FILLIES' HANDICAP
1m £3,184 (14 declared)

1 (13)	006340	Mouche (6) (BF) Mrs J Ramsden 4-10-0	J Fortune ● 90	
2 (2)	060-13	Dancing Feather (11) (D) B Hills 4-9-9	Paul Eddery	86
3 (9)	600	Cathedral Belle (10) Mrs M Reveley 4-9-3	A Culhane	—
4 (6)	0-1060	Delight Of Dawn (6) (C) (D) E Wheeler 6-9-0	S. Carson (7) ★	88
5 (12)	0 00	Persian Fantasia (48) J Dunlop 3-8-13	G Carter	—
6 (5)	03-040	Jacobina (16) B Rothwell 3-8-12	R Winston (5)	84
7 (4)	4-0004	Marake Machine (15) N Tinkler 3-8-8	Dean McKeown ★	—
8 (10)	0-0326	Mazilla (24) (D) (BF) A Streeter 6-8-5	R Havlin (3)	86
9 (11)	210402	Palins (87) (D) R Hollinshead 4-8-5	P M Quinn (7)	85
10 (7)	005406	Molly Music (8) (D) G Margarson 4-6-0	Dale Gibson	—
11 (3)	500410	Freckles (10) M Ryan 3-8-0	N Carlisle	87
12 (1)	00-00	Firth Emerald (15) C Wall 3-7-11	A McCarthy (3)	—
13 (8)	000/02	Ads Girl (17) S Gollings 7-7-10	F Norton	82
14 (14)	00-600	Lesley's Adventure (53) E Alston 3-7-10	W Supple	—

Betting: 9-4 Mouche, 7-1 Dancing Feather, Freckles, 8-1 Persian Fantasia, Mazilla, 12-1 Marake Machine, Palins, Ads Girl

5.30 MONKHILL CLASSIFIED STAKES
1m 2f £2,736 (7 declared)

1 (4)	1000-0	Canadian Fantasy (14) Mrs V Ward 4-9-7	J Weaver	—
2 (2)	-03204	Desert Fighter (11) (D) Mrs M Reveley 7-9-7	A Culhane ● 90	
3 (3)	202025	Summerhill Special (13) D Barker 7-9-6	T Williams	86
4 (7)	041260	Netta Rufina (12) (D) M Johnston 3-8-12	Dean McKeown	85
5 (5)	3-0040	Black Weasel (11) J Dunlop 3-8-10	G Carter ★	83
6 (1)	0-4303	Howies Choice (8) M Britain 3-8-10	J Carroll	82
7 (6)	365-40	Mormoon (11) B Hanbury 3-6-10	W Ryan	84

Betting: 2-1 Desert Fighter, 3-1 Summerhill Special, 6-1 Netta Rufina, 8-1 Canadian Fantasy, Black Weasel, Mormoon, 10-1 Howies Choice

Results

BATH

2.00 (5f 161yds): 1, DIGGIT, T Quinn (14-1); **2, My Petal** (14-1); **3, Final Dividend** (20-1). 4-1 co-fav Charge, Flits of Life, Thicket. 12 ran 1½, 1½. (M Channon) Tote: £11.00; £3.80, £3.80, £2.70. Dual F: £84.60. CSF: £167.84. NR: Dorissio.

2.30 (5f): 1, COSMO JACK, S Sanders (7-4 fav); **2, Apollinaire** (14-1); **3, My Mother's Dream** (12-1). 10 ran 1½, nk. (B Meehan) Tote: £2.90; £1.20, £3.80, £2.40. Dual F: £16.40. CSF: £25.93.

3.00 (1m 2f): 1, DIMINUTIVE, M Hills (11-2 jt-fav); **2, Pistol** (12-1); **3, Serendipity** (12-1). 11-2 jt-fav Present Situation. 12 ran 1½, 1½. (J Hills) Tote: £4.70; £1.60, £4.00, £3.80. Dual F: £41.40. Trio: £234.80. CSF: £66.51. Tricast: £700.48.

3.30 (1m 2f): 1, ZALAL, R Ffrench (11-8 fav); **2, Dual Island** (33-1); **3, Cadillac Jukebox** (25-1). 11 ran 2, ¾. (L Cumani) Tote: £2.00; £1.40, £6.60, £4.40. Dual F: £139.10. CSF: £52.13. NR: Silver Sun.

4.00 (2m 1f): 1, THE BLUES ACADEMY, M Dwyer (7-1); **2, Saintly Thoughts** (8-1); **3, Shohra Wa Jaah** (13-8 fav). 7 ran 1½, 1½. (M Buckley) Tote: £9.50; £2.80, £1.00. Dual F: £29.70. CSF: £59.24.

4.30 (5f): 1, SIHAFI, P Goode (2-1 Fav); **2, Dancing Mystery** (10-1); **3, Marino Street** (25-1); **4, Harvey's Future** (20-1). 18 ran ¾, 3, ½. (D Nicholls) Tote: £3.40; £1.50, £2.80, £7.10, £3.70. Dual F: £29.80. Trio: £513.40. CSF: £18.94. Tricast: £419.41.

PLACEPOT: £8,881.40. **QUADPOT:** £202.40.

MUSSELBURGH

2.15 (5f): 1, CARTMEL PARK, C Lowther (9-4); **2, Prince Consort** (6-1); **3, Get Stuck In** (10-11 fav). 5 ran Hd, 4. (J Berry) Tote: £3.10; £1.10, £3.40. DF: £8.00. CSF: £17.03.

2.45 (1m): 1, WALTZ TIME, R Lappin (50-1); **2, Doctor Bravious** (8-1); **3, Seconds Away** (100-30). 3-1 fav Fancy A Fortune. 14 ran ½, ½. (I Semple) Tote: £194.90; £43.30, £2.70, £1.60. DF: £495.70. CSF: £419.35. Tricast: £1,816.13.

3.15 (1m 1f): 1, BEST OF ALL, C Lowther (11-2); **2, Daira** (50-1); **3, Hobart Junction** (7-4 fav). 10 ran 3, 3. (J Berry) Tote: £8.30; £2.10, £3.30, £1.70. DF: £88.30. Trio: £77.50. CSF: £213.94. Tricast: £632.77.

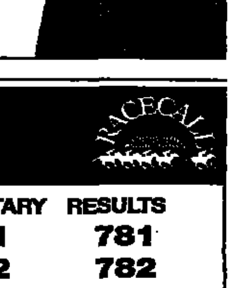
3.45 (5f): 1, SOUTHERN DOMINION, S Webster (7-1); **2, Jobayre** (5-2 fav); **3, Another Nightmare** (14-1); **4, Mukarrab** (10-1). 16 ran 1, nk, nk. (Miss J Craze) Tote: £9.50; £2.70, £1.10, £2.00, £3.60. DF: £12.80. Trio: £43.40. CSF: £23.32. Tricast: £246.28. NR: Wishbone Alley.

4.15 (2m): 1, BRODESSA, A Culhane (6-4); **2, Latvian** (9-1); **3, Breydon** (14-1). 8-11 fav Good Hand. 6 ran 1½, shd. (Mrs M Reveley) Tote: £3.20; £1.10, £5.20. DF: £13.30. CSF: £14.50.

4.45 (1m 4f): 1, HILL FARM DANCER, Iona Wands (11-2); **2, Sing And Dance** (7-2); **3, Little Miss Rocker** (33-1). 100-30 fav Eternity. 8 ran 3, 1½. (W Brisbourne) Tote: £6.60; £2.60, £1.10, £3.30. DF: £9.40. CSF: £23.13. Tricast: £528.53.

PLACEPOT: £87.30. **QUADPOT:** £13.60.

● Evening results, page 17



THERE IS NO CLOSER PARALLEL TO THE ACT OF LOVE THAN IN THE ELABORATE COURTSHIP DANCE BETWEEN PENALTY-TAKER AND GOALKEEPER.

Kronenbourg 1664 See Friday's paper

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The Guardian INTERACTIVE

Newmarket Jackpot programme

	GRAHAM ROCK	TOP FORM
2.05	Meneer	Meneer
2.35	Bowcliffe	Star Talent
3.05	Pipalong	Pipalong
3.40	Germano	Sabadilla
4.10	Misbah (nb)	Pool Music
4.45	Diamond White	Diamond White
5.15	Mousehole	Mousehole

Galloping track of 2m1f with right-hand bend at halfway. Races up to 1m run on straight Bunbury Mile.
Going: Good to firm. ★ Denotes blinkers. ● Top form rating.
Draw: No advantage.
Seven day winners: 2.35 Hugwity.
Blinkered first time: None. Visored: 4.10 Ziz; 4.45 Filfilah.
Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since last outing

2.05 STRUTT & PARKER MAIDEN STAKES 2YO — CH4
7f £5,299 (9 declared)

101 (6)		Dale E Dunlop 9-0	K Fallon	—
102 (3)		Gold Lodge S C Williams 9-0	R Hughes	—
103 (5)	3	Learned Friend (11) R Hannon 9-0	R Cochrane	89
104 (8)	42	Meneer (10) (BF) J Gosden 9-0	L Dettori ● 90	
105 (9)		Mostabdee M Tregoning 9-0	T Sprake	—
106 (4)		Nimello P Cole 9-0	T Quinn	—
107 (1)		Tawaag M Jarvis 9-0	P Robinson	—
108 (7)		Toto Caelo B Hills 9-0	M Hills	—
109 (2)		Waterfront P Chapple-Hyam 9-0	J Reid	—

Betting: 5-2 Meneer, 3-1 Learned Friend, 9-2 Waterfront, 7-1 Nimello, 8-1 Dale, 10-1 Toto Caelo, 14-1 Mostabdee

FORM GUIDE - Learned Friend: Held up, headway over 1f out, ran on, 3rd of 13, 1l behind Dehoush at Newmarket 6f mdn, Gd. Meneer: Held up, headway 2f out, ran on under pressure final furlong, not reach winner, 2nd of 11, shd behind Tayil at Newmarket 7f mdn, Gd.

2.35 H & K COMMISSIONS HANDICAP (SHOWCASE RACE) — CH4
1m £9,065 (20 declared)

201 (3)	/00241	Hugwity (6) (6lb ex) (D) G Bravery 6-10-1	N Day	86
202 (14)	15-005	Northern Blessing (16) (D) P Harris 4-10-0	J Reid	84
203 (5)	028121	Ben Gunn (13) (CD) P Walwyn 6-9-13	W R Swinburn	87
204 (10)	31-202	Wild Sky (36) M Heaton-Ellis 4-9-13	A Clark	86
205 (19)	204614	Mr Majica (8) (D) (BF) B Meehan 4-9-12	M J Kinane	83
206 (13)	000304	Star Talent (8) (D) I Balding 7-9-12	R Cochrane ● 90	
207 (20)	102400	Toujours Riviera (8) (D) J Pearce 8-9-10	G Bardwell	87
208 (16)	5-2033	Saley Ana (8) (D) (BF) B Hanbury 7-9-8	G Hind	86
209 (6)	053543	Judicial Supremacy (11) B Hills 4-9-8	M Hills	84
210 (8)	30-000	Green Power (13) (D) N Littmoden 4-9-8	V Slattery	—
211 (15)	030-00	Albawa (9) (D) Mrs J Ramsden 5-9-8	T Quinn	83
212 (4)	060200	Hever Golf Glory (11) (D) N Littmoden 4-9-7	T G McLaughlin	89
213 (2)	000250	Huntswood (6) R Hannon 3-9-5	Pat Eddery	82
214 (11)	-30006	Mount Holly (18) (D) K Mahdi 4-9-5	Dane O'Neill	87
215 (1)	54-23	Honest Borderer (65) J Dunlop 3-9-5	T Sprake	85
216 (7)	503020	Indium (8) W Musson 4-9-4	S Whitworth	86
217 (17)	00515	Loyal Toast (14) (BF) L Cumani 3-9-3	L Dettori	85
218 (18)	230245	Classic Find (18) Pat Mitchell 5-8-13	M Fenton	87
219 (9)	045602	Bowcliffe (9) (D) E Alston 7-8-11	K Fallon	88
220 (12)	630205	Swift (9) (D) M Polglase 4-8-11	J Tate	89

Hill's betting: 7-1 Ben Gunn, Loyal Toast, Star Talent, 10-1 Wild Sky, Albawa, Bowcliffe, 12-1 Hugwity, 14-1 Saley Ana, Judicial Supremacy, Honest Borderer, 16-1 Huntswood, 20-1 Swift, Indium, Mr Majica, Northern Blessing, 25-1 Toujours Riviera, Classic Find, Mounty Holly, 33-1 Hever Golf Glory, 40-1 Green Power.
Coral betting: 6-1 Loyal Toast, 7-1 Star Talent, Albawa, 8-1 Ben Gunn, 9-1 Bowcliffe, 11-1 Wild Sky, 14-1 Saley Ana, Honest Borderer, 16-1 Hugwity, Judical Supremacy, Mr Majica, 20-1 Swift, Northern Blessing, Toujours Riviera, Huntswood, 25-1 Indium, Mount Holly, 33-1 Hever Golf Glory, Classic Find, 40-1 Green Power.
Ladbrokes betting: 7-1 Ben Gunn, Bowcliffe, Loyal Toast, 8-1 Wild Sky, 9-1 Star Talent, 10-1 Albawa, 14-1 Indium, 16-1 Swift, Mr Majica, Hugwity, Huntswood, Honest Borderer, Judicial Supremacy, 18-1 Saley Ana, 25-1 Northern Blessing, Toujours Riviera, Mount Holly, Classic Find, 33-1 Hever Golf Glory, 50-1 Green Power.
Tote betting: 11-2 Loyal Toast, 7-1 Ben Gunn, Bowcliffe, 8-1 Star Talent, 11-1 Albawa, Wild Sky, 12-1 Saley Ana, 14-1 Honest Borderer, 16-1 Judicial Supremacy, Hugwity, 20-1 Huntswood, Indium, Mounty Holly, Mr Majica, 25-1 Hever Golf Glory, Classic Find, Northern Blessing, Swift, Toujours Riviera, 40-1 Green Power.

FORM GUIDE - Hugwity: Always prominent, led inside final furlong, driven out, beating Shining Cloud 1l, with Saley Ana (rec 2lb) 3rd, btn 2l, at Yarmouth 1m hcap, Gd. Northern Blessing: Led 6f, 5th of 9, 5l behind Sweet Pea at Newmarket 1m fils hcap, Gd. Ben Gunn: Held up, headway over 1f out, quickened to lead well inside final furlong, beating Theatre 2l at Salisbury 1m hcap, Gd-Fm. Wild Sky: Held up, headway over 2f out, ran on final furlong, 2nd of 12, 2l behind Ben Gunn (rec 7lb) at Newmarket 1m hcap, Gd-Fm. Mr Majica: Held up, ridden and headway over 2f out, one pace final furlong, 4th of 20, 5l behind Senor Horst at Yarmouth 1m claim, Gd. Judicial Supremacy: Held up in touch, outpaced over 3f out, rallied final furlong, stayed on, 3rd of 5, 3l behind Eden Heights at Newmarket 1m2f hcap, Gd. Green Power: Chased leaders, ridden 3f out, soon beaten, 8th of 10, 14l behind Mustique Dream at Warwick 1m hcap, Gd-Sft. Hever Golf Glory: Always in rear, 9th of 11, 8l behind Asset Manager at Newcastle 1m hcap, Gd. Huntswood: Never near to challenge, 8th of 14, 10l behind Amber Fort at Kempton 7f hcap, Gd-Sft. Mount Holly: Prominent far side, no headway final 2f, 6th of 16, 9l behind No Extras at Newmarket 7f hcap, Gd. Honest Borderer: Headway over 2f out, led inside final furlong, soon headed, ran on, 3rd of 5, 1l behind Wave Rock at Salisbury 1m2f hcap, Gd-Sft. Indium: Headway over 1f out, weakened inside final furlong, 12th of 20, 7l behind Panter at Goodwood 1m hcap, Gd-Fm. Loyal Toast: Tracked leaders, not clear run from 2f out, not recover, 5th of 9, 2l behind Roborant at Beverley 1m2f hcap, Gd. Classic Find: Prominent, every chance 2f out, weakened final furlong, 5th of 13, 3l behind Badrinath at Newmarket 1m app hcap, Gd. Bowcliffe: Held up and behind, good headway to challenge over 1f out, not quicken towards finish, 2nd of 21, 2l behind La Modiste, with Star Talent (gave 17lb) 4th, btn 3l, Swift (gave 4lb) 5th, btn 4l, Albawa (gave 16lb) 11th, btn 10l, Toujours Riviera (gave 17lb) 14th, btn 11l, at Doncaster 1m hcap, Gd.

3.05 CHARLES HEIDSIECK CHAMPAGNE CHERRY HINTON STAKES 2YO — CH4
6f £22,850 (10 declared)

301 (5)	22	Aunt Rio (16) M Bell 8-9	Pat Eddery	86
302 (4)	600	Black Rocket (28) K Mahdi 8-9	R Cochrane	82
303 (6)	1	Blue Melody (38) D Loder 8-9	L Dettori	88
304 (2)	21	Hasty Words (43) B Hills 8-9	M Hills	87
305 (8)	2	Kalidasa (61) P Chapple-Hyam 8-9	J Reid	85
306 (1)	21	Pescara (31) C Head (FR) 8-9	O Doleuze	88
307 (10)	112	Pipalong (20) T Easterby 8-9	L Charnock ● 90	
308 (6)	1	Rose Of Mooncoin (31) (CD) J Banks 8-9	M Roberts	87
309 (3)	31	Spirit Willing (17) (D) D Loder 8-9	K Fallon	86
310 (7)	421	Wannabe Grand (16) (CD) J Noseda 8-9	W R Swinburn	85

Betting: 5-2 Pipalong, 4-1 Spirit Willing, 5-1 Blue Melody, Pescara, 10-1 Hasty Words, Kalidasa, 12-1 Wannabe Grand

FORM GUIDE - Blue Melody: Headway over 2f out, hard ridden to lead final furlong, ran on, beating Morning Music by ½l at Leicester 5f mdn fils, Fm. Hasty Words: Held up, not clear run over 2f out until over 1f out, led final furlong, ran on, beating Lady Georgia 2l at Sandown 5f mdn fils, Gd. Kalidasa: Always prominent, strong challenge inside final furlong, ran on, 2nd of 10, nk behind Damalis at Chester 5f auction fils, Gd-Fm. Pipalong: Soon behind, headway well over 1f out, ran on well inside final furlong, 2nd of 17, 2l behind Bint Allayl, with Black Rocket (levels) 16th, btn 17l, at Ascot 5f Grp 3, Gd. Rose Of Mooncoin: Pulled hard, chased leaders, led over 1f out, ridden out, beating Wannabe Grand 2l at Newmarket 6f mdn fils, Gd. Spirit Willing: Made all, quickened clear over 1f out, ran on well, beating Pescara 7l at Ascot 6f nov, Gd. Wannabe Grand: Tracked leader, led 2f out, ridden out, beating Aunt Rio (levels) 3l at Newmarket 6f fils stks, Gd.

3.40 PRINCESS OF WALES'S STAKES (SHOWCASE RACE) — CH4
1m 4f £31,400 (7 declared)

401 (2)	15110-	Single Empire (395) (D) P Chapple-Hyam 4-9-7	J Reid	83
402 (4)	5-1225	Garuda (16) J Dunlop 4-9-2	T Quinn	88
403 (1)	24-132	Germano (18) G Wragg 5-9-2	Pat Eddery	87
404 (6)	/24-53	Multicoloured (16) Sir M Stoute 5-9-2	W R Swinburn	86
405 (7)	211-22	Sabadilla (20) (D) (BF) J Gosden 4-9-2	L Dettori ● 90	
406 (5)	11	Eaton Square (34) H Cecil 3-8-3	M J Kinane	88
407 (3)	2-3502	Fruits Of Love (9) M Johnston 3-8-3	M Hills	84

Hill's betting: 9-4 Germano, 11-4 Sabadilla, 7-2 Eaton Square, 7-1 Fruits Of Love, Garuda, 11-1 Multicoloured, 14-1 Single Empire.
Ladbroke betting: 9-4 Germano, Sabadilla, 7-2 Eaton Square, 8-1 Fruits Of Love, Garuda, 12-1 Multicoloured, 16-1 Single Empire.
Coral betting: 7-4 Germano, 3-1 Sabadilla, 4-1 Eaton Square, 13-2 Fruits Of Love, 7-1 Garuda, 12-1 Multicoloured, 20-1 Single Empire.
Tote betting: 9-4 Sabadilla, 5-2 Germano, 4-1 Eaton Square, 7-1 Garuda, 9-1 Fruits Of Love, 10-1 Multicoloured, 11-1 Single Empire.

FORM GUIDE - Single Empire: Prominent, ridden 6f out, weakening when bumped 2f out, 11th of 13, 38l behind Benny The Dip at Epsom 1m4f Derby, Gd. Garuda: 5th of 10, 2l behind Ungaro at San Siro 1m4f Grp 1, Gd. Germano: Held up, ridden over 2f out, every chance final furlong, not quicken, 2nd of 7, ½l behind Posidonas at Ascot 1m4f Grp 2, Gd-Sft. Multicoloured: Ridden 4f out, headway approaching final furlong, ran on, 3rd of 7, 5l behind Taunuse at Newmarket 1m4f listed, Gd. Sabadilla: Held up, headway over 2f out, every chance 1f out, unable to quicken, 2nd of 20, 1½l behind Greek Palace at Ascot 1m4f hcap, Gd-Sft. Eaton Square: Chased leader, led over 2f out, ridden out, beating Deep Dive 3½l at Goodwood 1m2f Nov stks, Gd. Fruits Of Love: Not clear run over 2f out, headway over 1f out, strong run final furlong, 2nd of 10, 1½l behind Happy Valentine at Kempton 1m2f listed, Gd-Sft.

4.10 LINCOLN MILD CIGARS RATED HANDICAP 3YO
6f £8,386 (15 declared)

501 (5)	01030-	Chips (282) (D) D Elsworth 9-7	S Drowne	85
502 (14)	634-53	Titanic (24) J Gosden 9-6	G Hind	86
503 (2)	3216-0	Zelanda (45) (D) (BF) J Gosden 9-6	L Dettori	86
504 (5)	0-0530	Pool Music (24) R Hannon 9-5	R Hughes ● 90	
505 (10)	-52150	Hill Magic (18) (D) D Elsworth 9-5	K Fallon	87
506 (1)	421-20	Misbah (21) B Hanbury 9-2	R Hills	88
507 (4)	6-0501	Gipsy Moth (11) (C) B Meehan 9-2	Pat Eddery	80
508 (12)	50120	Tango (28) (D) R Hannon 8-13	Dane O'Neill	85
509 (6)	22221-	Clef Of Silver (326) (D) W Jarvis 8-12	M Hills	83
510 (7)	-10410	Magic Rainbow (24) (D) M Bell 8-9	R Mullen (3)	88
511 (3)	1-55	Second Wind (10) P Cole 8-7	T Quinn	83
512 (13)	2100-3	Petarga (52) J Toller 8-7	S Sanders	87
513 (15)	1303-0	Ziz (26) K Burke 8-7	N Callan (7) ★	79
514 (11)	03-21	Tattinger (43) (D) J Fanshawe 8-7	T Sprake	82
515 (8)	420024	Jolies Jewel (18) (D) M Chapman 8-7	L Newton	83

Betting: 6-1 Tattinger, 7-1 Gipsy Moth, 8-1 Zelanda, Misbah, Magic Rainbow, 10-1 Titanic, Hill Magic, Clef Of Silver.

FORM GUIDE - Chips: Chased leaders, ridden over 2f out, soon weakened, 14th of 28, 9l behind Grade at Redcar 6f auct, Gd-Fm. Titanic: Bumped start, outpaced, never nearer, 3rd of 4, 6l behind Cortachy Castle at Sandown 5f stks, Gd-Sft. Zelanda: Held up, effort 2f out, soon ridden, no impression, 10th of 11, 20l behind Eastern Purple at Haydock 6f hcap, Gd-Sft. Pool Music: Chased leaders 4f, weakened, 17th of 22, 16l behind Friar Tuck, with Magic Rainbow (rec 15lb) last, btn 31l, at York 6f hcap, Gd-Sft. Hill Magic: Outpaced, 24th of 29, 13l behind Selhurstpark Flyer at Ascot 6f hcap, Gd-Sft. Misbah: Held up, every chance over 1f out, soon weakened, 9th of 31, 3l behind Plan-B at Ascot 1m hcap, Gd-Sft. Gipsy Moth: Tracked leaders, ridden to lead inside final furlong, ran on strongly, beating Brimstone 2½l at Newmarket 5f hcap, Gd. Tango: Prominent, ridden 2f out, weakened final furlong, 7th of 15, 8l behind Delta Soleil at Salisbury 6f hcap, Gd-Sft. Clef Of Silver: Chased leaders, ridden to lead over 1f out, edged left, stayed on well, beating Pigeon by 1½l at Catterick 6f hcap, Gd-Fm. Second Wind: With leader, led over 3f out until 2f out, weakened over 1f out, 5th of 8, 10l behind Splendrift at Salisbury 7f stks, Gd-Fm. Petarga: Always prominent, hard ridden over 1f out, ran on one pace final furlong, 3rd of 13, 2l behind Double Brandy at Newbury 6f hcap, Gd-Fm. Ziz: Led over 4f, soon beaten, 10th of 11, 28l behind Kayo at Newbury 7f hcap, Hvy. Tattinger: Tracked leaders, led over 1f out, ridden and ran on well, beating Typhoon Ginger ½l at Redcar 6f mdn auct, Gd-Fm. Jolies Jewel: Held up and behind, effort 3f out, stayed on, not pace to challenge, 4th of 8, 5l behind Pass The Rest at Ripon 1m hcap, Sft.

4.45 EQUITY FINANCIAL COLLECTIONS FILLIES HANDICAP
7f £7,632 (9 declared)

601 (7)	1-4005	Another Fantasy (32) R Hannon 9-0	Dane O'Neill	86
602 (2)	01-440	Flestinlog (17) (D) P Cole 8-12	T Quinn	86
603 (1)	-00451	Diamond White (17) (CD) G Bravery 8-8	M J Kinane ● 90	
604 (6)	110-	Rising Of The Moon (304) E Dunlop 8-1	T Sprake	86
605 (5)	50-042	Filfilah (11) P Walwyn 8-0	R Hills ★	87
606 (4)	12-43	Behold (16) J Fanshawe 8-0	Martin Dwyer	89
607 (9)	310-4	Up At The Top (32) B Hills 8-0	R Mullen (3)	82
608 (8)	0-2604	Poly Blue (28) Miss G Kelleway 8-0	W Lai (5)	84
609 (3)	60011-	Golden Fortune (288) (D) D Loder 8-0	W Ryan	83

Betting: 4-1 Golden Fortune, 5-1 Behold, 6-1 Diamond White, Filfilah, Up At The Top, 8-1 Another Fantasy, Flestinlog, Poly Blue, 12-1 Rising Of The Moon.

FORM GUIDE - Another Fantasy: Chased leader over 1f, ridden over 3f out, weakened final furlong, 5th of 8, 5l behind Lili Claire at Epsom 1m1f fils, Gd. Flestinlog: Held up mid-division, ridden over 2f out, weakened final furlong, last of 12, 16l behind Fizzed at Ascot 1m fils hcap, Gd-Sft. Diamond White: Held up, headway going well 2f out, led over 1f out, soon clear, comfortably, beating Filfilah (gave 2lb) 5l at Folkestone 7f fils hcap, Gd-Fm. Rising Of The Moon: Soon ridden along, behind final 2f, 11th of 12, 13l behind Asfurah at Newmarket 6f Grp 2, Gd. Behold: Prominent, ridden over 1f out, kept on well final furlong, 3rd of 9, 3l behind Sweet Pea at Newmarket 1m fils hcap, Gd. Up At The Top: Dwelt, held up and behind, effort 2f out, not pace to challenge, 4th of 7, 4l behind Persian Fayre at Haydock 7f stks, Gd. Poly Blue: Not much room over 2f out, headway over 1f out, one pace, 4th of 11, 10l behind Kayo at Newbury 7f hcap, Hvy. Golden Fortune: Always prominent, ridden over 1f out, led inside final furlong, ran on, beating Belle de Nuit 1l at Newmarket 7f hcap, Gd.

5.15 NGK SPARK PLUGS SOHAM HANDICAP
5f £6,420 (14 declared)

1 (13)	0-0422	Tadeo (15) (D) R Armstrong 5-10-0	R Price	85
2 (14)	0166-5	Canovas Heart (55) (D) Bob Jones 9-10-0	N Day	87
3 (5)	32104-	Sharp Pearl (286) (CD) P R Webber 5-9-13	R Hughes ★	84
4 (4)	46-480	Ellens Lad (18) (D) E Alston 4-9-10	K Fallon	88
5 (12)	021-00	Afaan (96) (D) (BF) R Marvin 5-9-2	T G McLaughlin	85
6 (6)	30-122	Pleasure Time (19) (D) C Smith 5-8-10	A Clark ★	83
7 (8)	000833	Mousehole (16) (D) R Guest 6-8-7	P Robinson ● 90	
8 (7)	401565	Sue Me (4) (D) D Nicholls 6-8-8	M Richardson	87
9 (1)	022622	Maladerie (6) M Channon 4-8-4	T Quinn ★	80
10 (6)	0-3601	Sky Red (15) (D) M Bell 3-8-2	R Mullen (3)	81
11 (3)	530300	Ajnad (8) R Marvin 4-8-1	S Righton (7)	80
12 (10)	006420	Swynford Dream (25) (D) J Hetherton 5-8-0	J Lowe	86
13 (2)	55-003	Miss Money Spider (11) N Callaghan 3-7-13	G Bardwell	85
14 (11)	000-30	Loganlea (93) W Musson 4-7-10	M Henry	86

Betting: 6-1 Mousehole, 7-1 Pleasure Time, Maladerie, 8-1 Tadeo, Canovas Heart, Sue Me, Sky Red.

FORM GUIDE - Tadeo: Prominent, led 1f out, soon headed and unable to quicken, 2nd of 8, 1l behind Literary Society at Yarmouth 6f stks, Gd. Canovas Heart: Always chasing leaders, unable to quicken approaching final furlong, 5th of 16, 2l behind Stuffed at York 5f hcap, Gd. Sharp Pearl: Slowly into stride, headway 2f out, ran on final furlong, 4th of 13, 1½l behind Swan At Whalley at Chester 5f hcap, Gd. Ellens Lad: Pulled hard, tracked leaders until lost place 2f out, 13th of 15, 28l behind Gaelic Storm at Newcastle 6f hcap, Sft. Afaan: Raced far side, dwelt, soon chasing leaders, ridden halfway, weakened over 1f out, 12th of 20, 7l behind Swino at Thirsk 5f hcap, Gd-Sft. Pleasure Time: Disputed lead until headed over 1f out, kept on well under pressure, 2nd of 8, ½l behind Lago di Varano at Ripon 5f hcap, Sft. Mousehole: Prominent, ridden over 3f out, every chance inside final furlong, ran on, 3rd of 15, 3l behind Windrush Boy at Lingfield 5f hcap, Gd. Sue Me: Tracked leaders far side, effort 2f out, not quicken behind Natural Key at Hamilton 6f hcap, Fm. Maladerie: Always prominent, led 2f out, headed inside final furlong, unable to quicken, 2nd of 9, 2l behind Ivory Dawn at Brighton 6f hcap, Gd. Sky Red: Tracked leader, led well over 1f out, ridden and ran on final furlong, beating One To Go 1l at Musselburgh 5f mdn, Gd-Fm. Ajnad: Prominent, hard ridden over 1f out, weakened over 1f out, 11th of 12, 12l behind Ice Age at Yarmouth 6f hcap, Gd. Swynford Dream: Slowly into stride, always outpaced and behind stands' side, 15th of 16, 27l behind Polly Golightly at York 5f hcap, Gd-Sft. Miss Money Spider: Slowly into stride, soon chasing leaders, ran on one pace final furlong, 3rd of 8, 3l behind Gipsy Moth at Newmarket 5f hcap, Gd. Loganlea: Chased leaders 4f, soon weakened, 17th of 23, 9l behind Mike's Double at Thirsk 6f hcap, Gd.

● Mick Channon had a big smile on his face after newcomer Diggit landed the Evershot Maiden Stakes at Bath yesterday. "Let's just say it augers very well for the future," noted the trainer, "as we've got a few colts at home who are about the same or better than him." Sent off at 14-1, Diggit answered all of Richard Quinn's urgings to get the better of My Petal inside the final furlong and pass the post with a length and a half to spare.

Good news



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Heroics at Old Trafford

Welshman who did it for Britain

David Hopps sees a fisherman save one that nearly got away

CALL off the funeral. Banish the pall-bearers. The Test that began so drearily that English cricket was held to be in terminal decline bestowed upon its mourners a finish so tense that it bore comparison with the greatest draws in Test history.

"The last hour and a half seemed to take about three days," gasped England's captain Alec Stewart. If only the first three days had lasted about an hour and a half, life would have been perfect.

Robert Croft might feel that it is well-nigh perfect already. He has not taken a Test wicket this summer and before yesterday his place at Trent Bridge was held to be in peril. Perhaps it still is. Yet the Welshman batted with such spunk for more than three hours that his captain, Stewart, seemed bent on anointing him as English. "My great-grandfather was from Essex but he walked all the way to Wales," retorted Croft, who prefers to think of doing it for Britain.

If the crowd's mind had frequently wandered because of boredom during the wastes of the first three days, Croft allowed his mind to wander at the crease yesterday to alleviate the tension. He covered just about everything: the size of the fish he hopes to catch today, the state of the house he is building, and the debates he plans with his mates back at Hendy Rugby Union Club about the performance of the Wales side in South Africa.

This was the same player whose batting pretensions had been stripped bare last summer by the Australians. For Glenn McGrath there had been no easier wicket than Croft's; time and again the short ball clanked into his helmet or was fended uncomfortably to a leg-side catcher.

Now he was not only keeping out Allan Donald but even embroidering his defensive shots on occasions with a cocky little flourish, as if to confirm that his technique was in better working order. His first Test half-century still eludes him but this was a greater response than figures can relate.

"Last year you only had to bowl short at him to get him out," said Stewart. "Graham Gooch has worked with him, but Crofty deserves the most credit. He accepted that he had a problem and in practice he has taken a lot of blows."

For 20 overs Croft was joined by Darren Gough, the finger he broke at Edgbaston barely healed. "My old mate Goughie," lilted Croft *of his England soulmate*, although the occasion when Gough almost tempted him into a suicidal single to Jonty Rhodes at cover may have strained relationships a little.

England clung on, and Stewart met Croft on the outfield with a hand-slap and an embrace. England survived; South Africa's bowling attack has wounds to lick, both physical and metaphorical. Who knows what might happen now?

●*Debate cricket with David Hopps on the Net at cricket96.co.uk*



Joined forces . . . Allan Donald, who took six for 88, and Mark Boucher celebrate Alec Stewart's dismissal PAUL BARKER

Snooker

O'Sullivan given hefty drug fine

Clive Everton

RONNIE O'SULLIVAN yesterday escaped a ban but was fined £61,130, the equivalent of his prize-money for winning the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters in March when he tested positive for marijuana.

As the Irish Masters is an invitation event there were no ranking points to forfeit, but O'Sullivan has been stripped of the title and Ken Doherty, beaten 9–3 in the final, declared the champion.

O'Sullivan, through his solicitor Henri Brandman, admitted taking marijuana five days before the event. It is not recognised as a performance-enhancing drug in snooker but its use is illegal and it is on the Sports Council's banned list.

The offence could cost him close to a six-figure sum. He has been ordered to pay £150 costs and awaits a bill for legal services. He is also liable for income tax on the forfeited prize-money.

The world No. 3 from Essex, who was accompanied at the two-hour hearing in Bristol by his manager Ian Doyle and Brandman, was not banned even though the offence occurred within the two-year period of a suspended sentence. That was imposed for his assault on the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association press officer Mike Ganley during the 1996 World Championship.

The WPBSA directors Jim Meadowcroft, Bob Close and David Taylor declined to implement the suspension "on the basis that it was not warranted due to the different natures of the rules in question".



O'Sullivan . . . escaped ban

Tennis

Henman hits world high

Stephen Bierley

TIM HENMAN's run to the semi-finals at Wimbledon, where he lost in four sets to the champion Pete Sampras, was duly reflected in yesterday's ATP Tour rankings with the British No. 2 climbing five places to a career-high No. 13.

Greg Rusedski, who entered the championships with an injured left ankle and was forced to default in the first round against Mark Draper of Australia, has slipped one place to No. 6.

The British No. 1 is still receiving treatment but hopes to make his comeback in the Legg Mason Classic in Washington this month, before starting the concentrated run-in to the US Open which begins on August 31 and where last year he lost to Pat Rafter of Australia in the final.

As yet there is no news on Rusedski's new coach, after the break-up during Wimbledon with the 63-year-old Tony Pickard, the former mentor of Sweden's Stefan Edberg.

Rusedski is apparently keen to employ someone who is based in Britain, although not necessarily British, and with whom he can also practise. John McEnroe's former doubles partner Peter Fleming, who lives in London, springs to mind.

Henman, unlike Rusedski, was not particularly successful on the American hard courts last year, losing in the second round of the US Open to South Africa's Wayne Ferreira, so he has an excellent chance of increasing his points total and climbing into the top 10 for the first time.

By contrast Rusedski has a lot of points to defend between now and the end of the year, both in the United States and on Europe's indoor courts. He will be striving to reach the ATP Championships for a second successive year, while Henman's Wimbledon semi-final gives him a chance of playing in the lucrative Grand Slam Cup.

As for the British women, very much in the men's shadow, Sam Smith's run to the fourth round at Wimbledon has seen her rise to No. 58 — the highest by a British woman since Jo Durie was at 37 in July 1992 — which will guarantee her automatic entry to the US Open. Less than a month ago she was floundering around the 128 mark.

Rugby League

Gateshead target McRae

Andy Wilson

SHAUN McRAE has emerged as Gateshead's preferred coach if their application for a 1999 Super League franchise is accepted.

Malcolm Reilly, the former Great Britain coach, has also expressed interest in joining Gateshead when he leaves Australia's Newcastle Knights at the end of this season. But Shane Richardson, the Australian businessman who is leading Gateshead's bid, is believed to have identified McRae as his top target.

McRae joined St Helens from Canberra Raiders in early 1996 and within a year had guided the club to a Challenge Cup and Super League double. But his future at Knowsley Road has been thrown into doubt by the departure of his two main allies, the former chairman Eric Ashton and chief executive David Howes, within the past six months — particularly as Ashton's successor, Tom Eilard, has subsequently reappointed Eric Hughes, the man McRae succeeded, as football operations manager.

The Salford centre Scott Naylor is the latest player to pull out of the Emerging England squad for the international against Wales at Widnes a week on Sunday. Naylor, who has only just returned from a hamstring injury, sprang his shoulder in Sunday's home defeat by Warrington.

Emerging England are already without Warrington's stand-off Jon Roper, and the Salford half-back Steve Blakeley, who was named as captain, is doubtful with a foot problem which has been troubling him for a month. Steve Molloy, Sheffield's experienced prop, is Blakeley's most likely replacement as captain.

The Rugby Football League has been forced to cancel two of the five fixtures on this November's Kiwi tour at the request of their New Zealand counterparts. The Kiwis are unwilling to risk a financial loss by playing either Emerging England at Gateshead or Wales at Swansea or Cardiff, so the tour will now be three Tests at Huddersfield, Bolton and Watford.

Golf

Faldo in fighting mood

NICK FALDO was the first to arrive at Loch Lomond yesterday to practise for this week's Standard Life tournament — on the day that his world ranking dropped to a new low of joint 50th.

He was up at 6.30am on the day after finishing 27th in the Irish Open, which said everything about the 40-year-old's eagerness to end a 16-month spell without a victory.

But Faldo admits that winning is not his only target; just to be back in contention would be a big step forward as he takes the final opportunity to get his game in shape for the Open, which starts at Royal Birkdale on Thursday week.

"I would love to get in there and fight it out with the guys," he said. "Being realistic, I just want to be up there in contention and play under tournament pressure again. That's when you find out how well you are doing everything. On the range I'm hitting it great, but a few little quirks are happening on the course.

"I can go out like I did this morning and hit the blooming thing great, and it's frustrating how minute the things I am working on are, while others I watch are working on drastic changes and are getting away with murder. I feel I am paying for a bad shot 95 per cent of the time.

"I've a good attitude at the moment and I've got to be patient. Once it all slots back in, I'll have done the work. I still love it. I love playing the game and the day I say I couldn't care less about playing bad will be the day it's over.".

Faldo has missed the halfway cut in the last three majors and is outside the top 100 on the US Tour money list this season.

Tom Lehman, the 1996 Open champion, will defend the Loch Lomond title against a field including Colin Montgomerie, Lee Westwood and the American amateur champion Matt Kuchar, who finished 21st and 14th in the Masters and US Open this year.

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Sport in brief

Basketball

Kevin Cadle is leaving London Towers after the 1997 champions' disappointing season. The American-born coach will be replaced by Lino Frattin, 37, a former assistant with Virtus Bologna and Verona in Italy.

Ice Hockey

Ayr Scottish Eagles have signed the former NHL netminder Vincent Riendeau to replace Rob Dopson, last season's Superleague Player of the Year, *writes Vic Batchelder*. Riendeau, 32, a veteran of 184 games with NHL clubs in Boston, Detroit, Montreal and St Louis, played last season in Germany and Switzerland.

Motor Racing

The former Formula One driver Gerhard Berger has been confirmed as BMW motorsport director in Munich, *writes Alan Henry*. The Austrian, who won last year's German Grand Prix for Benetton, *is expected to help develop* the Williams-BMW F1 car due to race in 2000.

Rugby Union

The Test wing David Rees, who missed England's summer tour with injury, has signed a three-year extension to his contract with Sale. Worcester, promoted to Premiership Two, have signed Richmond's former England Students scrum-half Ben Harvey.

Drugs in Sport

Dieter Binus, a sports doctor in the former East Germany, yesterday admitted giving anabolic steroid tablets to young female swimmers in 1975-89.

Binus, one of six swimming *coaches and doctors accused* of causing bodily harm, told a Berlin court that he had refused to give steroid injections because they were known to bring about masculine traits but added: "It was my job to carry out orders."

Results

Football

INTERTOTO CUP: Second round, first legs: TPS Turku (Fin) 0 Shinnik Yaroslavl (Rus) 2; Boby Bruno (Cz) 5 Espanyol (Sp) 3; Akademisk Boldklub (Den) 2 Vorskla Poltava (Ukr) 2; SV Salzburg (Aut) 3 St Gallen (Switz) 1; Iraklis (Gr) 3 National Bucuresti (Rom) 1; Lommelse SK (Bel) 0 Torpedo Kutaisi (Georgia) 1; FK Vojvodina (Yug) 2 Orebro SK (Swe) 0; Sampdoria (It) 2 Rimavska Sobota (Slovak) 0; Samsunspor (Tur) 3 Lyngby (Den) 0; DVSC Debrecen (Hun) 0 Hradec Kralove (Cz) 0; Altay (Tur) 1 Diosgyori (Hun) 1; Orgryte (Swe) 2 KS Ruch Chorzow (Pol) 1; Osota Trencin (Slovak) 0 Baltika Kaliningrad (Rus) 1; Werder Bremen (Ger) 4 Inkaras (Lith) 1; Makedonija Skopje (Mac) 1 SC Bastia (Fr) 0; Twente (Neth) 2 Kongsviger (Nor) 0.

Golf

GREATER HARTFORD OPEN (Cromwell, Connecticut): Final leading scores (US unless stated): 266 S Cink 67, 65, 67, 67; O Browne 67, 66, 66, 67; L Mize 68, 63, 65, 69 (Browne won on the first hole of a sudden death playoff). 267 D Waldorf 70, 67, 64, 66; F Funk 70, 66, 65, 66; D Tewell 66, 66, 68, 67. 268 D Duval 65, 66, 68, 69; S Hoch 66, 68, 64, 71. 269 J Sindelar 68, 66, 69, 66; L Mattiace 67, 69, 66, 67; K Perry 65, 69, 67, 68. 270 V Singh (Fiji) 68, 67, 73, 62; M Brooks 69, 65, 67, 69. 271 M Springer 71, 67, 69, 65; B Andrade 68, 69, 66, 68. 272 J Durant 70, 69, 69, 65; M Calcavecchia 70, 64, 69, 69; W Wood 70, 66, 64, 72; G Waite (NZ) 69, 64, 65, 75. 273 D Toms 72, 66, 70, 65; J Carter 68, 71, 67, 67; G Sauers 71, 65, 69, 68; J Riegger 67, 70, 67, 69; N Lancaster 71, 63, 65, 70. Also: 278 E Toledo (Mex) 69, 68, 71, 71. 281 R Coughlan (Ire) 69, 70, 69, 73.

WORLD RANKINGS: Top 20 (US unless stated): 1, T Woods 10.83 pts ave; 2, E Els (SA) 10.50; 3, D Love 10.37; 4, D Duval 9.33; 5, G Norman (Aus) 9.20; 6, C Montgomerie (GB) 8.83; 7, J Leonard 7.95; 8, N Price (Zim) 7.88; 9, P Couples 7.83; 10, P Mickelson 7.67; 11, M O'Meara 7.55; 12, L Westwood (GB) 7.52; 13, T Lehman 7.38; 14, M Ozaki (Japan) 6.77; 15, J Furyk 6.34; 16, V Singh (Fiji) 6.29; 17, S Hoch 5.95; 18, J Parnevik (Swe) 5.84; 19, T Watson 5.60; 20, M Calcavecchia 5.58.

US WOMEN'S OPEN (Kohler, Wisconsin): Leading final scores (US unless stated; *=amateur): 280 S R Pak (Kor) 69, 70, 75, 76; *J Chasse-Jorn 73, 71, 75, 72 (Pak and Chasse-Jorn play 18-hole playoff). 281 L Neumann (Swe) 70, 70, 75, 76. 282 D Ammaccapane 76, 71, 74, 71; P Hurst 69, 75, 75, 73; C Johnson 72, 70, 76, 74. 283 S Croce (It) 74, 71, 76, 72; T Green 73, 71, 76, 73; M McKay (GB) 72, 70, 73, 78. 284 T Johnson (GB) 73, 71, 77, 73. 285 L Davies (GB) 68, 75, 78, 74; D Pepper 71, 71, 73, 70. 286 J Lidback (Per) 71, 73, 73, 72; H Alfredsson (Swe) 73, 73, 73, 74; C Koch (Swe) 72, 74, 77, 73. 287 H Stacy 76, 68, 68, 71; A Acker-Macosko 74, 74, 76, 73; B Burton 74, 72, 77, 74; D Ammaccapane 75, 70, 78 74. 288 L Kane (Can) 74, 72, 82, 70; R Jones 74, 74, 74, 76; A Fukushima (Japan) 72, 71, 79, 76; D Andrews 70, 75, 75, 78; W Ward 76, 69, 75, 78; L Walters (Can) 76, 70, 74, 73. 289 N Scranton 70, 72, 74, 73; D Dorman 72, 76, 78, 72. M Estill 75, 74, 76, 74; H Dobson (GB) 71, 75, 77, 76; L Rinker-Graham 75, 71, 77, 76. 290 K Webb (Aus) 76, 73, 73, 78. 291 D Coe-Jones (Can) 71, 74, 83, 73. 292 A Sorenstam (Swe) 71, 75, 79, 77. 295 H Kobayashi (Japan) 74, 73, 78, 81. 306 S Lowe (GB) 74, 75, 73, 84. 309 J Stephenson (Aus) 73, 77, 82, 77.

Tennis

ATP SWISS OPEN (Gstaad): First round: F Mantilla (Sp) bt T Giardiola (Fr) 6–2, 6–2; F Dewulf (Bel) bt A Portas (Sp) 3–6, 7–6, 6–2; F Meligeni (Br) bt Y Kafelnikov (Rus) 6–3, 4–6, 6–3; F Cinvrst (Sp) bt A Berasategui (Sp) 6–4, 6–4; S Dosedel (Cz) bt I Hesberger (Switz) 7–6, 6–3; G Blanco (Sp) bt T Carbonell (Sp) 6–4, 6–3; F Santoro (Fr) bt B Ullirych (Cz) 7–5, 6–3.

ATP SWEDISH OPEN (Bastad): First round: J-A Marin (Sp) bt A di Pasquale (Fr) 4–6, 7–5, 6–4; M Gustafsson (Swe) bt F Jonsson (Swe) 5–1, 8–3; M Mirnyi (Aus) bt A Vinciguerra (Swe) 6–2, 1–6, 7–6; R Fromberg (Aus) bt J Sanchez (Sp) 6–1, 6–2; M Safin (Rus) bt J Palmer (US) 6–3, 7–5.

WTA TOUR RANKINGS: Top 20: 1, M Hingis (Switz) 5,885pts; 2, J Novotna (Cz) 4,507; 3, L Davenport (US) 4,494; 4, A Sanchez Vicario (Sp) 3,264; 5, M Seles (US) 2,997; 6, V Williams (US) 2,946; 7, C Martinez (Sp) 2,513; 8, A Coetzer (SA) 2,316; 9, I Spirlea (Rom) 2,161; 10, N Tauziat (Fr) 2,152; 11, D Van Roost (Bel) 1,997; 12, P Schnyder (Switz) 1,944; 13, S Testud (Fr) 1,835; 14, M Pierce (Fr) 1,800; 15, A Kournikova (Rus) 1,682; 16, N Zvereva (Bela) 1,659; 17, A Sugiyama (Japan) 1,589; 18, A Huber (Ger) 1,586; 19, L Raymond (US) 1,488; 20, I Majoli (Cro) 1,375.

Baseball

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Atlanta 9 NY Mets 2 (11inns); Cincinnati 6 St Louis 1; Montreal 1 Florida 2; Philadelphia 4 Milwaukee 3; Chicago Cubs 7 Pittsburgh 6; Houston 5 Arizona 2; San Diego 7 Colorado 2; San Francisco 3 Los Angeles 0. **Standings: East:** Atlanta (W58, L29, Pct.670, GB0); 2, NY Mets (44-39-.530-12½); 3, Philadelphia (43-42-.505-14½); 4, Montreal (34-52-.395-24); 5, Florida (32-55-.368-26½). **Central:** 1, Houston (W53, L34, Pct.609, GB0); 2, Chicago Cubs (48-38-.558-5); 3, Milwaukee (43-42-.506-9); 4, St Louis (40-46-.465-12½); 5, Pittsburgh (40-48-.455-13½); 6, Cincinnati (39-50-.438-15). **West:** 1, San Diego (W57, L37, Pct.648, GB0); 2, San Francisco (52-37-.584-5½); 3, Los Angeles (43-44-.494-13½); 4, Colorado (37-52-.416-20½); 5, Arizona (30-58-.341-27).

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Boston 15 Chicago WS 14; Toronto 2 Tampa Bay 1; NY Yankees 1 Baltimore 0; Kansas City 3 Cleveland 12; Minnesota 5 Detroit 4; Anaheim 4 Oakland 5; Texas 8 Seattle 5. **Standings: East:** 1, NY Yankees (W61, L20, Pct.753, GB0); 2, Boston (52-33-.612-11); 3, Toronto (46-42-.523-18½); 4, Baltimore (38-50-.432-26½); 5, Tampa Bay (34-52-.395-29½). **Central:** 1, Cleveland (W50, L35, Pct.588, GB0); 2, Minnesota (40-45-.485-10½); 3, Kansas City (38-46-.462-12½); 4, Chicago WS (36-51-.407-15½); 5, Detroit (34-50-.405-15½). **West:** 1, Anaheim (W48, L37, Pct.570, GB0); 2, Texas (48-39-.552-1½); 3, Oakland (41-45-.477-8); 4, Seattle (37-51-.420-13).

Cricket

AON TROPHY: Baldons Nottinghamshire 215 (G E Welton 51). Durham 180. Nottinghamshire won by 35 runs. **Canterbury: Essex** 211–6 (A J E Hibbert 75no). Match abandoned — rain. **New Road, Worcester:** Hampshire 310–5 (L Sevidant 120, W S Kendal 95). Worcestershire 104 (Francis 5–28). Hampshire won by 206 runs. **The Oval: Sussex** 248–9 (R S C Martin-Jenkins 50). *Surrey* 194 (*G J Kennis 71. Martin-Jenkins* 5–29). Sussex won by 54 runs.

MINOR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP: Newports: Wales 173–9 and 267–5 (K M Bell 81, M S Lee 50). Shropshire 200–6 and 109–3. Match drawn. Wales (3pts) Shropshire (5). **Hagloon:** Northumberland 241–8 and 227–6 (W Fells 91, O S Youll 58). Bedfordshire 197–8 and 195–5 (D J M Mercer 54no). Match drawn. Bedfordshire (5pts) Northumberland (4). **Reading:** Berkshire 181–9 and 188 (Sharp 5–27). Cornwall 178–6 and 76–5. Match drawn. Berkshire (2pts) Cornwall (6). **Torquay:** Wiltshire 134 and 198–8 (M J Glasson 83no). Devon 415–4. Match abandoned as a draw. Devon (6pts) Wiltshire (1). **Slough:** Buckinghamshire 401–9. Norfolk 271–8 (C Amos 100, D R Thomas 55no). Match drawn. Buckinghamshire (6pts) Norfolk (8). **Lincoln Lindsey:** Cumberland 179 and 183 (A A Metcalfe 79; Parsons 5–60). Lincolnshire 182 and 181–7 (M A Fell 92no; Pennett 4–41). Lincolnshire (22pts) bt Cumberland (4) by three wickets. **Stanley Park: Suffolk** 418–8 (P J Caley 108) Herts 17–1. Match abandoned as a draw. Herts (6pts) Suffolk (7).

Sailing

INTERNATIONAL FLYING 15 OPEN MEETING (Parkstone YC): 1=, Boss no 3611 (A Box/B Masterman) Hayling Island SC; 3573 (R Mander/P Busby) Draycote SC; 3514 (N Jerwood/J Jerwood) Chew Valley SC 3pts; 4, 3648 (M Hicks/P Hicks) Oxford & Cambridge Sailing Society 6; 5, 3591 (D Apthorp/D Apthorp) Hayling Island SC 10; 6, 3556 (M O'Dell/A Streeter) Hayling Island SC 10.

SOLING EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (after 4 races): 1, S Pichugin, V Korotkov, S Timokhov (Ukr) 17pts. British: 15, A Beadsworth, B Parida, R Sydenham 84; 32, A Green, C Murray, J Turner 123.

Evening Racing

Newton Abbot

6.45 (2m 6f) 1, RUNAWAY PETE, G Supple (10–11 Fav); 2, Sweet Clement (5–2); 3, If You Say So (25–1). 5 ran. 10, 7. (M Pipe) Tote: £2.00; £1.10, £2.30. Dual F: £2.70. CSF: £3.58. 7.15 (2m 1f) 1, VENETIAN SCENE, A P McCoy (2–5 Fav); 2, Cockist (10–1); 3, Fletcher's First (5–1). 4 ran. 2¼, 4. (M Pipe) Tote: £1.30. Dual F: £1.60. £1.40. Dual F: £88.80. Trio: £32.30. CSF: £70.82. Tricast: £112.78. NR: Discretion.

Windsor

6.35 (1m 2f 7yds) 1, GRENKOV, C Rutter (14–1); 2, Princess Ray (12–1); 3, Mystic Ridge (7–1); 4, Duello (11–1). 11–4 Fav Tul. 17 ran. ¾, hd. (H Morrison) Tote: £36.80; £7.00, £2.60, £2.00. Dual F: £345.90. CSF: £166.74. Tricast: £1,182.08. 7.05 (1m 3f 135yds): 1, FLOW BY, Pat Eddery (5–2 Fav); 2, Dutch Lad (3–1); 3, Lennox Bridge (3–1). 7 ran. 12. 1. (J Dunlop) Tote: £3.20; £2.00, £2.80. Dual F: £4.70. CSF: £9.86. 7.35 (1m 67yds): 1, WARRING, Pat Eddery (6–1); 2, Twin Creeks (9–1); 3, Casillio (13–2); 4, Agent Bladder (13–2). 5–1 Fav Admirals Flame. 18 ran. 3, 2. (M Saunders) Tote: £36.50; £8.00, £2.10, £2.20, £1.80. Dual F: £29.30. Trio: £57.40. CSF: £54.90. Tricast: £360.35. 8.05 (6f 10yds): 1, AMAZING DREAM, Dane O'Neill (8–1); 2, Majedana (2–1); 3, Battle Lowland (10–11 Fav). 12 ran. 2¼, 2. (R Hannon) Tote: £9.30; £1.70, £1.30, £1.10. Dual F: £9.60. Trio: £3.90. CSF: £22.74.

Fixtures

Cricket

SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP (11.0; four days): **Studley CC: Warwickshire v Worcestershire.**

AON TROPHY (11.0; one day): **Letterworth: Leicestershire v Northamptonshire. Lydney CC: Gloucestershire v Glamorgan.**

MINOR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP (11.0; two days): **Fenner's: Cambridge v Cumberland. Christ Church: Oxfordshire v Cornwall.**

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France 98

David Lacey weighs up the teams who will contest the World Cup semi-finals

Unusual suspects in way of Brazil's fifth

THE 1998 World Cup is promising the best climax since 1970. The quarter-finals have provided the script, the props and the cast for the tournament's most memorable denouement since Pele and Tostao, and Luigi Riva and Gianni Rivera, brought Brazil and Italy face to face in the Aztec Stadium in Mexico City all those years ago.

So far France has seen a brisker version of the football-ing carnival that stretched across the United States in 1994. But that World Cup was let down by a final between Brazil and Italy which mocked its glorious predecessor.

Two tired teams plodded, goalless and soulless, to a penalty shoot-out in the Rose Bowl which robbed the event of the ending it deserved. This time it should be different, if only because neither finalist will be dragged across four time zones with only three days between matches, Italy's fate last time.

Two moments in Saturday's quarter-finals have set up the sort of semi-finals of which classical finishes are made: Dennis Bergkamp's last-minute winner for Holland against Argentina, and Robert Jarni's opening goal for Croatia which marked the beginning of the end of Germany's resistance.

Thus, in less than 48 hours, three of the World Cup's most successful competitors were on their way home. Argentina, Italy and Germany will doubtless be back in strength in 2002 but for the moment the task of stopping Brazil winning the competition a fifth time will fall to others.

Certainly Holland will have the quality and experience to deny Brazil a place in the final when they meet in the Stade Vélodrome tonight. Their confrontation in Dallas in the quarter-finals four years ago was one of the best matches of the tournament, Holland recovering from 2-0 down to draw level at 2-2 late in the second half, only for Branco to win it for Brazil.

The fright Denmark gave Mario Zagallo's side on Friday may have reminded Brazil of that encounter with the Dutch. Certainly Brazil cannot afford a repetition of the slack defending and careless passing which gave the Danes the chance to get back into a contest which appeared to have moved beyond them.

The strength of Wim Jonk and Edgar Davids in Holland's midfield and their consistently strong links with Bergkamp and Patrick Kluivert may well pose further questions about Dunga, who looked under pressure against Denmark. And with Marc Overmars unfit it will be up to PSV Eindhoven's Boudewijn Zenden to exploit the space left by Roberto Carlos when he pushes forward.

Brazil's best hope, of course, lies with Ronaldo and the bewildering maze of movement he sets up with Rivaldo, Bebeto and Leonardo. The Holland defence is vulnerable against pace and in Jaap Stam Manchester United appear to have bought a £10 million telegraph pole.

With Brazil meeting Holland in one semi-final and the host nation taking on opposition from eastern Europe in the other, the games tonight and tomorrow evening will carry echoes of 1974.

Although that World Cup had no semi-finals as such, the decisive games in the quarter-final groups, which saw Holland beat Brazil 2-0 in Dortmund and West Germany defeat Poland 1-0 on a rain-soaked pitch in Frankfurt, amounted to the same thing.

France, therefore, could be forgiven for treating a Dutch victory tonight as a good omen for their game against Croatia at St-Denis tomorrow, which promises to be as tight and intoxrcted a contest as tonight's game should be open.

Since winning their first-round group France, who went into the World Cup without a natural goalscorer, have found it increasingly difficult to set up chances for the marksmen they do have. Against Paraguay's disciplined defence, with Zinedine Zidane suspended, their attack almost gave up until Laurent Blanc's golden goal. Against Italy, even though Zidane was back, their football in the last third of the pitch lacked incisiveness.

Croatia are nothing if not efficient at the back: the Germans soon discovered that. They defend en masse around Igor Stimac and Slaven Bilic and in Lyon the pace of Mario Stanic on the right was their most consistent outlet.

A stalemate is a possibility tomorrow unless Zidane or Zvonimir Boban can break the mould before the football starts to congeal. Croatia have the more likely match-winner in Davor Suker but the France defence, with Marcel Desailly in such inspired form, will not yield easily.

Two World Cups ago Italy, the hosts, were knocked out in the semi-finals on penalties by Argentina. Can French nerves stand a second successive shoot-out, having been strained to breaking point in a quarter-final won when the last Italian kick hit the bar?

Whatever happens, a fascinating World Cup final is guaranteed. It could be Brazil against France, who provided such a wonderful quarter-final in Mexico in 1986. Holland against Croatia, on the other hand, would be a novelty and at least Miroslav Blazevic, the Croatia coach, would be able to wear his prized gendarme's cap. As a trademark it is becoming as famous as the red-and-white bowler worn by Bob Stokoe when Sunderland won the FA Cup in 1973.

Brazil v Holland

Goalkeeper
Taffarel has had a steady tournament but has yet to be put under serious pressure on crosses — his main weakness.

Defence
Suspect when opponents run at them with the ball and off the ball. Junior Baiano can be taken for pace.

Midfield
Needs Ronaldo to come deep to ease the pressure on Dunga, who is looking tired.

Attack
Their greatest strength is the ability to score from almost any position, although they are heavily reliant on Ronaldo being a provider as much as a finisher.
Odds: 4-7
Key player: Ronaldo

Goalkeeper
Van der Sar has been steady but will be tested by Brazil's penchant for shooting from sudden and unexpected angles.

Defence
Suspect, partly though faulty judgment on offsides but also through the ease players have in catching Stam on the turn.

Midfield
Plenty of options, with Davids and Seedorf doing the running and changing positions at pace.

Attack
The loss of Overmars is a blow. But Bergkamp's ability to bewitch defenders and Kluivert's quick reactions should make this Brazil's biggest test yet.
Odds: 5-4
Key player: Bergkamp

Kluivert anxious to leave Italy

Martin Thorpe reports on the options open to Holland's Milan striker next season

AS THE World Cup draws to a close, two things tend to happen: first, players succumb to injury and suspension; second, transfer speculation moves into gear.

As Holland prepared yesterday for their semi-final against Brazil in Marseille, the talk was not just about how the coach Guus Hiddink would replace his injured players Marc Overmars and Winston Bogarde and the suspended left-back Arthur Numan. It was also about which club the striker Patrick Kluivert would be playing for next season.

The Milan player is anxious to leave Italy and says he will choose between clubs in Spain, England and Italy. However, although there has been speculation that Arsenal are among the clubs interested in him, no concrete offer has yet been made by Arsène Wenger.

Yesterday Kluivert was basically putting himself in the shop window. "I know I must try to leave Italy now. It has not worked out for me at Milan," he said.

"If there are clubs who want to sign me they should know I would love to go to either England, Spain or stay in Italy because I believe I can produce my real form in those leagues.

"Now Dennis Bergkamp has won the championship and the FA Cup in England I believe I would be successful there as well. Bergkamp and I are both strong and we have power together. If I went to Parma it would make more sense from a practical point of view. But there is always the English solution."

Uppermost in Kluivert's mind, however, was how to score against Brazil in a team which will show enforced changes from the one that beat Argentina in the quarter-finals.

With the Rangers-bound Numan suspended after being sent off, Hiddink had planned to play Bogarde at left-back. But he broke his ankle in training and now it looks as though the versatile Philip Cocu, who has already played centre-forward and outside-left in this tournament, will move back. Alternatively Michael Reiziger could be switched to left-back with Aron Winter brought in at right-back.

Overmars's hamstring injury will probably keep him out of the match against Brazil. "I'm very doubtful for the game," he said. "Realistically I may aim to make the final." His replacement is likely to be the 21-year-old up-and-coming winger Boudewijn Zenden, like Cocu from PSV Eindhoven but also bound for Barcelona.

The Holland defender Jaap Stam, who has been giving Manchester United kittens with some of his errors in this tournament, must find the confidence to shackle Ronaldo.

He is no doubt about the task ahead, having played with the Brazilian at PSV. "Nobody can dispute his quality," said Stam. "It was obvious when he played at PSV when he was only 18."

Despite all the changes Hiddink is confident that his team can beat Brazil. "As a child I remember Brazil as a very good team that brought a bit of fantasy to people. Then the 10 outfield players were all artists and now Brazil has changed its philosophy, and as a lover of football that's a pity. We take more risks than Brazil in defence. If I adopted their philosophy the fans and media would kill me."

Golden Boot

Batistuta (Argentina)	5
Vieri (Italy)	5
Hernandez (Mexico)	4
Salas (Chile)	4
Suker (Croatia)	4
Bergkamp (Holland)	3
Bierhoff (Germany)	3
Cesar Sampaio (Brazil)	3
Henry (France)	3
Klinsmann (Germany)	3
Rivaldo (Brazil)	3
Ronaldo (Brazil)	3



Itchy feet . . . Patrick Kluivert has put himself in the shop window with Arsenal among those interested BEN RADFORD

European draws

United look for sanctuary in hunting Lodz

Michael Walker

ENGLISH football's long and sometimes difficult relationship with Poland looks certain to have a couple of new chapters to add to its history soon. Not only are the Poles in England's European Championship qualifying group, but yesterday's draw for the qualifying rounds of the Champions League threw up the chance of Manchester United meeting Widzew Lodz next month.

Lodz must overcome the Azerbaijan champions Kepez in the first qualifying round on July 23 and 30 but, if they do, they will meet United at Old Trafford on August 12, the return leg coming a fortnight later. The clubs met in the 1981 Uefa Cup first round, Lodz progressing on an away goal after a 1-1 draw at Old Trafford.

Three days before the game at Old Trafford, United are due to meet Arsenal at Wembley in the Charity Shield. That match might be switched to the Saturday to give United an extra day's preparation, although the United secretary Ken Merrett has said his club are still expecting to play on the Sunday. "We know nothing yet about either [East European] team," he said, "and it's important because we play in the Charity Shield on the Sunday."

If United need reassurance they can look to their own European trophy-winning history as they have twice beaten Polish opposition on the way to winning a competition. In 1968, Gornik Zabrze were beaten before United won the European Cup, and in 1992 Legia Warsaw lost in the semi-final of the Cup Winners' Cup before United beat Barcelona in Rotterdam.

Celtic, in their first Champions League for a decade, were not quite so fortunate with the draw. They should beat St Patrick's Athletic of Dublin comfortably but then the Glasgow team, who are still without a replacement for their manager Wim Jansen, will face Croatia Zagreb.

Zagreb, who have provided seven of Croatia's World Cup squad, are formidable opposition; against them last year Newcastle United required luck and favourable refereeing to squeak through.

Celtic were drawn to play their first leg against St Patrick's in Dublin, but Rangers were also drawn to play in Dublin on the same day against Shelbourne in the Uefa Cup. So Celtic's first-leg game has been moved to Glasgow on July 22.

Kilmarnock are also in the Uefa Cup and the political situation in Bosnia will have to be watched carefully before they travel to Sarajevo to play Zeljeznicar.

In the Cup Winners' Cup, Hearts go to Estonia on August 14 to meet Lantana in Tallinn, the city famous in Scotland for the "match that never was" in last year's World Cup qualifying group.

Most sympathy should go to Barry Town of Wales, who have been drawn against the mighty Dynamo Kiev in the Champions League.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE: Second qualifying rounds: Manchester United v Widzew Lodz or Kepez; Celtic or St Patrick's Athletic v Croatia Zagreb, Dynamo Kiev or Barry Town v Sparta Prague; Kosice or Cliftonville (N Ire) v Brondby.
CUP WINNERS' CUP: Cork City v CSKA Kiev; Bangor City (Wales) v Haka; Lantana v Hearts; Glentoran (N Ire) v Maccabi Haifa.
UEFA CUP: Linfield (N Ire) v Omonia Nicosia; Rangers v Shelbourne (Ire), Newtown v Wisla Krakow, Zeljeznicar v Kilmarnock.

Brazil prepare to samba with water-melon man and then damn the Dutch with faint praise

BRAZIL are ready to give a slice of the action to a water-melon salesman against Holland.

Today Ze Carlos will have greatness thrust upon him. He was not even meant to be in the squad, coming in at the last minute because of injury to Flavio Conceicao, and had even booked his wedding for June. This time last year he was playing for a second division club in Brazil and had to supplement his football salary with part-time jobs. Having made his way up via seven clubs since his professional debut in 1990, he hit the big time when Sao Paulo signed him and he was included in the international squad for the March friendly in Germany, which forced him to buy his first suit.

The 30-year-old, who is set to replace the suspended right-back Cafu, said he would take the match in his stride.

"It's a game like any other, just 11 players against 11 players. It is not necessary to do anything extraordinary. I'll just play my usual simple game."

His team-mates said they had every confidence in him. The left-back Roberto Carlos said: "He wouldn't have been selected if he wasn't a great player."

Ze Carlos, however, failed to shine when he played for the first team against the reserves in a 3-3 draw yesterday at Brazil's Lesigny base. He was at fault for all three goals.

The champions will field four survivors from their 1994 quarter-final win over Holland: the captain Dunga, the goalkeeper Taffarel, Aldair and Bebeto.

Brazil concentrated on their own tactics yesterday and disdained to fret about Holland. "They are a very technically gifted team but we know they've got defensive weaknesses," Brazil's assistant coach Zico said, damning with faint praise.

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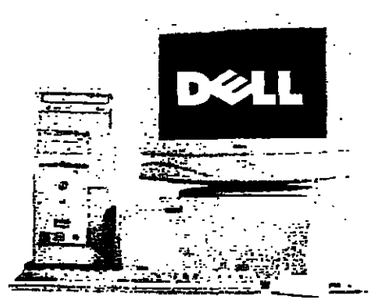
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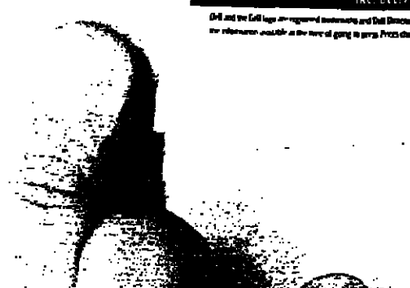
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France 98



Rags to riches . . . Ronaldo yesterday found himself far removed from his humble origins in Rua General Cesar Obino PHOTOGRAPH: DIETHER ENDLICHER

Mean street where the young Ronaldo first got his kicks

Alex Bellos visits the family that Brazil's superstar left behind in Rio

RUA General Cesar Obino is like any other suburban Brazilian street. It has a bar, a primary school and an evangelical church. An old woman sits in the sun on the steps outside her home. Children are kicking a football around. World Cup decorations — flags and yellow-and-green ribbons — hang across the road. The Eiffel Tower is painted on the ground with the word "BRASIL".

This is the road where Ronaldo Luis Nazario de Lima lived for 17 years. In 1994 he moved to Europe and, losing his middle and surnames, became one of world's most famous sportsmen. Today he faces the most important match of his 21 years when Brazil meet Holland for a place in the World Cup final.

For the residents of Rua General Cesar Obino, however, life is little changed. For them Ronaldo's career path is difficult to comprehend. It seems no time at all since the shy boy nicknamed Dadado — Gimme — used to hang out with them on the street.

"No one ever thought he would be the best in the world," says his old friend Marcio Perez, 22, who was in the army but is now unemployed. One of Ronaldo's cousins, Carlos Eduardo Barata, an 18-year-old trainee chef, says: "I still can't believe it. A few years ago he was riding around here on a bicycle; now he has a Ferrari."

Sixteen of Ronaldo's close relatives live at the address in the poor Rio de Janeiro suburb of Bento Ribeiro where he was brought up, a messy plot of land with three small box homes. A paper sign taped to the stone gatepost reads: "Kites. For sale."

The doorbell does not work. Only when one of the boys playing street football jumps on the wall and shouts does anyone emerge from the house at the rear of the yard. It is Ronaldo's aunt, Adriana, who is selling paper kites, painted with the Brazilian strip, for the equivalent of 15p.

> His aunt Adriana is selling painted paper kites for the equivalent of 15p

When Ronaldo was there he slept on the sofa in the living-room which he shared with his older brother Nelio. His mother was a shop assistant at a snack bar and his father an engineer with the telephone company. Now they live apart in well-furnished homes in rich parts of Rio.

Other relatives stayed in Bento Ribeiro. Adriana and her husband Roger, a policeman, now live in Ronaldo's house with their daughter. Their World Cup decorations are modest in Rio terms: three Brazilian flags hanging on the outside walls.

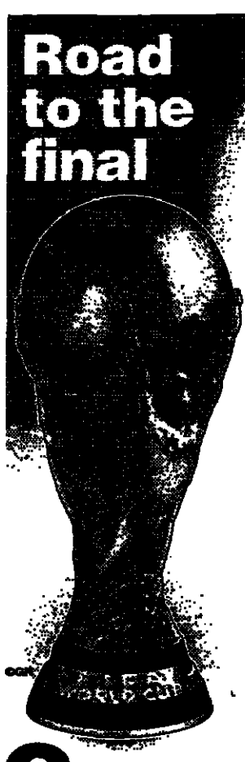
Inside there are no signs that the family has any connection with Ronaldo. There are no photographs, no posters. His only influence is a Nike T-shirt on the clothes line in the courtyard — a gift when he paid a visit at Christmas.

The homes are simply furnished. There is no telephone but the family has a large freezer and a decent-sized television set connected to cable. Five family members from three generations are watching a cartoon. Giselle, 12, looks disconcertingly like her big cousin, sharing the same toothy grin.

Another cousin, Suzi Pinheiro Barata, 28, says: "Everyone always asks what he has bought us. But generally he doesn't help the family. He's not a bad person but he's very young. He's just doing what his business people want at the moment. The gate was falling down so we rebuilt it. People thought it was from his money but we paid it ourselves."

Like the rest of Brazil, Ronaldo's family will be cheering him on today and hoping that his pledge to score most goals in the tournament will finally be realised.

Road to the final



A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	3	2	1	0	5	3	7
Norway	3	1	2	0	5	4	5
Morocco	3	1	1	1	5	5	4
Scotland	3	0	0	3	2	5	0

Wed, June 10 - St-Denis
Brazil 2
Cesar Sampaio 4, Boyd (og) 73
Scotland 1
Collins (pen) 38
Attendance: 80,000

Wed, June 10 - Montpellier
Morocco 2
Hadji 38, Hadda 59
Norway 2
Chippo (og) 45, Eggen 82
Attendance: 29,750

Thur, June 11 - Bordeaux
Scotland 1
Burley 67
Norway 1
H Flo 48
Attendance: 30,226

Thur, June 11 - Nantes
Brazil 3
Ronaldo 9, Rivaldo 45, Bebeto 50
Morocco 0
Attendance: 33,366

Fri, June 12 - Marseille
Brazil 1
Bebeto 78
Norway 2
T A Flo 83, Rekdal (pen) 89
Attendance: 65,500

Fri, June 12 - St Etienne
Scotland 0
Morocco 3
Bassir 22, 84, Hadda 47
Attendance: 35,000

B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Italy	3	2	1	0	7	3	7
Chile	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
Austria	3	0	2	1	3	4	2
Cameroon	3	0	2	1	2	5	2

Thur, June 11 - Bordeaux
Italy 2
Vieri 10, R Baggio (pen) 85
Chile 2
Salas 45, 50
Attendance: 31,600

Thur, June 11 - Toulouse
Cameroon 1
Njanka 77
Austria 1
Polster 90
Attendance: 37,500

Wed, June 17 - St Etienne
Chile 1
Salas 70
Austria 1
Vastic 90
Attendance: 36,000

Wed, June 17 - Montpellier
Italy 3
Di Biagio 8, Vieri 75, 89
Cameroon 0
Attendance: 35,000

Tue, June 23 - St-Denis
Italy 2
Vieri 49, R Baggio 90
Austria 1
Herzog (pen) 80
Attendance: 75,000

Tue, June 23 - Nantes
Chile 1
Sierra 21
Cameroon 1
Mboma 56
Attendance: 39,000

C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	3	3	0	0	6	1	9
Denmark	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
S Africa	3	0	2	1	3	5	2
S Arabia	3	0	1	2	2	7	1

Fri, June 12 - Lens
Saudi Arabia 0
Denmark 1
Rieper 68
Attendance: 36,140

Fri, June 12 - Marseille
France 3
Dugarry 35, Issa (og) 78, Henry 90
South Africa 0
Attendance: 55,077

Tue, June 16 - Toulouse
South Africa 1
McCarthy 52
Denmark 1
Nielsen 13
Attendance: 36,500

Tue, June 16 - St-Denis
France 4
Henry 36, 77, Trezeguet 69, Lizarazu 85
Saudi Arabia 0
Attendance: 75,000

Wed, June 24 - Lyon
France 2
Djorkaeff (pen) 13, Petit 56
Denmark 1
M Laudrup (pen) 42
Attendance: 43,600

Wed, June 24 - Bordeaux
South Africa 2
Bartlett 18, (pen) 90
Saudi Arabia 2
Al-Jaber (pen) 45, Al-Thyniyan (pen) 73
Attendance: 34,500

D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria	3	2	0	1	5	5	6
Paraguay	3	1	2	0	3	1	5
Spain	3	1	1	1	8	4	4
Bulgaria	3	0	1	2	1	7	1

Fri, June 12 - Montpellier
Paraguay 0
Bulgaria 0
Attendance: 27,850

Sat, June 13 - Nantes
Spain 2
Hierro 21, Raul 47
Nigeria 3
Adepoju 24, Lawal 73, Olisen 79
Attendance: 33,257

Fri, June 19 - Paris
Nigeria 1
Ikpeba 27
Bulgaria 0
Attendance: 48,500

Fri, June 19 - St Etienne
Spain 0
Paraguay 0
Attendance: 35,500

Wed, June 24 - Lens
Spain 6
Hierro (pen) 6, Luis Enrique 18, Morientes 53,81 Kiko 86,90
Bulgaria 1
Kostadinov 56 Attendance: 40,500

Thur, June 24 - Toulouse
Nigeria 1
Okuna 10
Paraguay 3
Ayala 1, Benitez 59, Cardoso 88
Attendance: 36,500

E

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Holland	3	1	2	0	7	2	5
Mexico	3	1	2	0	7	5	5
Belgium	3	0	3	0	3	3	3
S Korea	3	0	1	2	2	9	1

Sat, June 13 - Lyon
South Korea 1
Ha Seok-Ju 28
Mexico 3
Pelaez 51, Hernandez 75, 84
Attendance: 37,588

Sat, June 13 - St-Denis
Holland 0
Belgium 0
Attendance: 75,000

Sat, June 20 - Bordeaux
Belgium 2
Wilmots 43, 48
Mexico 2
Garcia Aspe (pen) 56, Blanco 63
Attendance: 34,750

Sat, June 20 - Marseille
Holland 5
Cocu 37, Overmars 41, Bergkamp 71, Van Hooijdonk 79, R De Boer 83
South Korea 0
Attendance: 60,000

Thur, June 25 - St Etienne
Holland 2
Cocu 4, R de Boer 19
Mexico 2
Pelaez 75, Hernandez 90
Attendance: 35,500

Thur, June 25 - Paris
Belgium 1
Nilis 7
South Korea 1
Yoo 70
Attendance: 48,500

F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	3	2	1	0	6	2	7
Yugoslavia	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
Iran	3	1	0	2	2	4	3
US	3	0	0	3	1	6	0

Sun, June 14 - St Etienne
Yugoslavia 1
Mihailovic 73
Iran 0
Attendance: 30,392

Sun, June 21 - Paris
Germany 2
Moller 9, Klinsmann 85
United States 0
Attendance: 43,875

Sun, June 21 - Lens
Germany 2
Mihailovic (og) 73, Bierhoff 80
Yugoslavia 2
Mijatovic 13, Stojkovic 54
Attendance: 40,775

Sun, June 21 - Lyon
United States 1
McBride 87
Iran 2
Estili 40, Mahdavikia 84
Attendance: 44,000

Thur, June 25 - Montpellier
Germany 2
Bierhoff 50, Klinsmann 58
Iran 0
Attendance: 35,000

Thur, June 25 - Nantes
United States 0
Yugoslavia 1
Komljanovic 4
Attendance: 39,000

G

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	3	2	1	0	4	2	7
England	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Colombia	3	1	0	2	1	3	3
Tunisia	3	0	1	2	1	4	1

Sun, June 14 - Montpellier
England 2
Shearer 42, Scholes 90
Tunisia 0
Attendance: 54,567

Mon, June 15 - Lyon
Romania 1
Ilie 45
Colombia 0
Attendance: 37,572

Mon, June 22 - Montpellier
Colombia 1
Preciado 83
Tunisia 0
Attendance: 35,000

Mon, June 22 - Toulouse
Romania 2
Moldovan 47, Petrescu 90
England 1
Owen 83
Attendance: 37,500

Tue, June 30 - St Denis
Romania 1
Moldovan 72
Tunisia 1
Souayah (pen) 10
Attendance: 80,000

Tue, June 30 - Lens
Colombia 0
England 2
Anderton 20, Beckham 30
Attendance: 41,275

H

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Argentina	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Croatia	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Jamaica	3	1	0	2	3	9	3
Japan	3	0	0	3	1	4	0

Sun, June 14 - Toulouse
Argentina 1
Batistuta 26
Japan 0
Attendance: 38,400

Sun, June 14 - Lens
Jamaica 1
Earle 45
Croatia 3
Stanic 27, Prosinecki 53, Suker 89
Attendance: 38,058

Sat, June 20 - Nantes
Japan 0
Croatia 1
Suker 77
Attendance: 38,000

Sat, June 20 - Paris
Argentina 5
Ortega 32, 55 Batistuta 73, 79, (pen) 83
Jamaica 0
Attendance: 48,500

Fri, June 26 - Bordeaux
Argentina 1
Pineda 36
Croatia 0
Attendance: 35,000

Fri, June 26 - Lyon
Japan 1
Nakayama 75
Jamaica 2
Whitmore 39, 64
Attendance: 43,500

SECOND ROUND

Game 1 - Sat, June 27 - Paris
Brazil 4
Sampaio 11, 27
Ronaldo (pen) 45, 70
Chile 1
Salas 58
Attendance: 49,300

Game 2 - Sat, June 27 - Montpellier
Italy 1
Vieri 18
Norway 0
Attendance: 60,000

Game 3 - Sat, June 28 - Lens
France 1
Blanc 114
Paraguay 0
Attendance: 41,275

Game 4 - Sat, June 28 - St-Denis
Nigeria 1
Babangida 77
Denmark 4
Moller 3, B Laudrup 12
Sand 60, Helveg 78
Attendance: 79,500

Game 5 - Mon, June 29 - Toulouse
Holland 2
Bergkamp 38, Davids 90
Yugoslavia 1
Mihajlovic 48
Attendance: 36,500

Game 6 - Mon, June 29 - Montpellier
Germany 2
Klinsmann 75, Bierhoff 86
Mexico 1
Hernandez 47
Attendance: 35,000

Game 7 - Tue, June 30 - St-Denis
Romania 0
Croatia 1
Suker (pen) 45
Attendance: 34,700

Game 8 - Tue, June 30 - St Etienne
Argentina 2
Batistuta (pen) 8, Zanetti 45
England 2
Shearer (pen) 10, Owen 16
Argentina win 4-3 on penalties
Attendance: 30,600

QUARTER FINALS

Game A - Fri, July 3 - Marseille (3pm)
Brazil 3
Bebeto 11, Rivaldo 26, 60
Denmark 2
Jorgensen 2, B Laudrup 50
Attendance: 40,000

Game B - Fri, July 3 - St-Denis (7pm) — ITV
Italy 0
France 0
France win 4-3 on penalties
Attendance: 77,000

Game C - Sat, July 4 - Marseille
Holland 2
Kluivert 12, Bergkamp 90
Argentina 1
Lopez 18
Attendance: 55,000

Game D - Sat, July 4 - Lyon
Germany 0
Croatia 3
Jarni 45, Vlaovic 80, Suker 85
Attendance: 39,100

SEMI FINALS

Tue, July 7 - Marseille (8pm)
Brazil
Holland

Wed, July 8 - St-Denis (8pm) — BBC
France
Croatia

3RD/4TH PLACE PLAY-OFF

Sat, July 11 - Paris (8pm)
Losers of first semi-final
Losers of second semi-final

FINAL

Sunday, July 12 - St-Denis (8pm)

Winner of **first** semi-final
Winner of **second** semi-final

ALL TIMES BST

Clogger

A furtive glance at France 98

Kids' stuff The debate about whether 11 Ronaldos could win the World Cup should be solved in 2018. At least 15 boys born in the Albanian port of Berat since the start of the tournament have been named after the Brazil striker. Parents there are also using garden shears to force a gap between their children's front teeth.

Golden boys Gabriel Batistuta (below) is "Batigol" and Michael Owen has been dubbed "Babygol" but why stop there? Jim Leighton should surely be known as "You'd-be-better-off-with-someone-else-in-goal". France's strikers as "Anyone-remember-the-way-to-the-goal"; and the card-wielding Mexican Arturo Brizio Carter as "Off-you-go!". Of course we wouldn't dare. Include Paraguay's defender Francisco "Arce-ipo".

Reminding ourselves News of a challenge for the title "the new John Motson". A recent commentary by the Cameroonian Hammed Adio included the remarkable insight: "Duriga passes to ... someone." Of course "Mystic" Kev Keegan would known where the ball was heading long before it had been kicked.

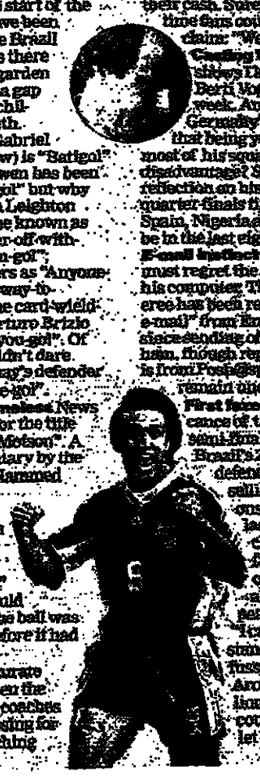
Top guns Inaccurate shooting has been the bane of several coaches but it was a blessing for customers watching the football in a restaurant in Thailand. Their enjoyment was curtailed when a diner drew a gun, fired shots into the air and relieved viewers of their cash. Surely the first time fans could legitimately claim: "We was robbed."

Casting vote "It just shows I know nothing," Berti Vogts said last week. An admission by Germany's coach (left) that being younger than most of his squad was a slight disadvantage? Sadly not, just a reflection on his appalling quarter-finals tips: "I expected Spain, Nigeria and England to be in the last eight," he said.

E-mail instinct Kim Nielsen must regret the day he bought his computer. The Danish referee has been receiving "hate e-mail" from England fans since sending off David Beckham, though reports that one is from Posh@spice.co.uk remain unconfirmed.

First base The significance of the World Cup semi-final has escaped Brazil's Ze Carlos. The defender who was selling watermelons at a market last year, is clearly not fazed by the occasion. "I'm a simple man, a peasant," he said. "I can't understand what all the fuss is about."

Around 150 million Brazilians could probably let him know.



Laudrup out to give his all to Chelsea

BRIAN LAUDRUP quit international football yesterday and said he would put all his efforts into making a success of his move to Chelsea.

The 29-year-old former Rangers striker won 82 caps for Denmark and scored his 12th international goal in the 3-2 quarter-final defeat by Brazil on Friday. He had been expected to spearhead their 2000 European Championship qualifying campaign, which starts on September 5 in Belarus.

His older brother Michael also announced before France 98 that the tournament would be his last.

Ariel Ortega will miss the first three matches of next year's Copa America in Paraguay after being sent off in Saturday's quarter-final for butting the Holland goalkeeper Edwin van der Sar, having picked up a yellow card for diving in the penalty area after a challenge by Jaap Stam.

The Germany defender Christian Wörns, sent off in the 3-0 quarter-final defeat by Croatia for a late tackle on Davor Suker, will miss the first two qualifying matches of the European Championship.

Rinus Michels, the mastermind of the Dutch "total football" philosophy of the 1970s and the coach who guided Holland to the 1974 World Cup final, was in hospital yesterday after suffering a heart attack. Fifa said he was in a stable condition and was expected to leave hospital in a few days.

Michels, known as "the General", returned as Holland's coach in 1988 and guided them to victory in that year's European Championship.

Home round-up

Wednesday woo Wilson from irate Barnsley

Russell Thomas

SHEFFIELD Wednesday finally got their man yesterday, ending effectively a three-year pursuit of Danny Wilson, much to the anger of Barnsley's forthright chairman John Dennis.

As Wilson made the short South Yorkshire journey and Barnsley's veteran forward John Hendrie was promoted in his place at Oakwell, Dennis made his feelings clear about the loss of one of the most highly rated young managers in English football.

"The events of the last few days were unwelcome, unsolicited and very disappointing," said Dennis, who recalled the 38-year-old Wilson's public pledge to stay at Oakwell shortly after Barnsley's relegation concluded their only season in the top flight.

He claimed Wednesday's failure to attract a foreign coach, and Walter Smith's late rejection of Hillsborough in favour of Everton last week, had prompted "the unwelcome approach for Danny".

Dennis said: "We tried everything to get Danny to stay. It wasn't a money thing. Danny had a good relationship as a player with Wednesday, and it was the only club he would have left Barnsley for.

"Wednesday contacted me in the middle of last week and I told them to go away, but I was honour-bound to tell Danny about the approach."

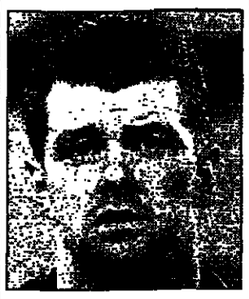
Dave Richards, Wednesday's chairman, is believed to have offered sizeable transfer funds to Wilson to seal the deal for the man who was first approached by his club in May 1995. Now Wilson returns to Hillsborough as successor to Ron Atkinson.

Although Richards admitted it was "an understatement" to say Dennis had resisted the move, Wilson said: "The way the transfer has been handled has been very, very professional. I certainly wouldn't have come if the deal hadn't been done correctly."

Dennis defended his decision to appoint an untried manager in Hendrie. "We have a reputation of appointing young managers: Allan Clarke, Norman Hunter and Danny Wilson. There is no reason to doubt this policy." Hendrie, 34, said he had "no inclination whatsoever" about his promotion but had the "total support of the players".

Bryan Robson yesterday made his first Middlesbrough signing of the summer by paying £900,000 for Crystal Palace's wing-back Dean Gordon and will hand out twice as much later this week for the returning Gary Pallister. Robson played down the 33-year-old centre-back's injury problems. "Pallister missed only five Manchester United games last season through injury and has drive and commitment."

The Cup Winners' Cup holders Chelsea have been fined £4,000 by Uefa, punishment for the "improper conduct of supporters" during their 3-1 semi-final defeat of Vicenza at Stamford Bridge.



Pallister . . . back at Boro

One-goal Djorkaeff insists he will be France's winner

FRANCE's attacking midfielder Youri Djorkaeff, who has scored only once in this tournament, from a penalty, has answered his critics.

"I don't care what people say," said Djorkaeff, the most prolific scorer in the squad with 18 goals from 43 internationals. "Every time I saw somebody in a better position than mine I gave him the ball. Don't tell me I shouldn't have done that.

"Paraguay's only preoccupation was to reach the penalties. We expected Italy would play less defensively but they didn't.

"When you face teams who only concentrate on defending it's not easy to score. I will score against Croatia, just wait and see."

All four semi-final teams will wear their home strips.

France 98: The Dutch keep dreaming, page 18

Ronaldo's home thoughts from abroad, page 19

O'Sullivan's £61,000 fine, page 17

Rewriting the tennis rankings, page 17

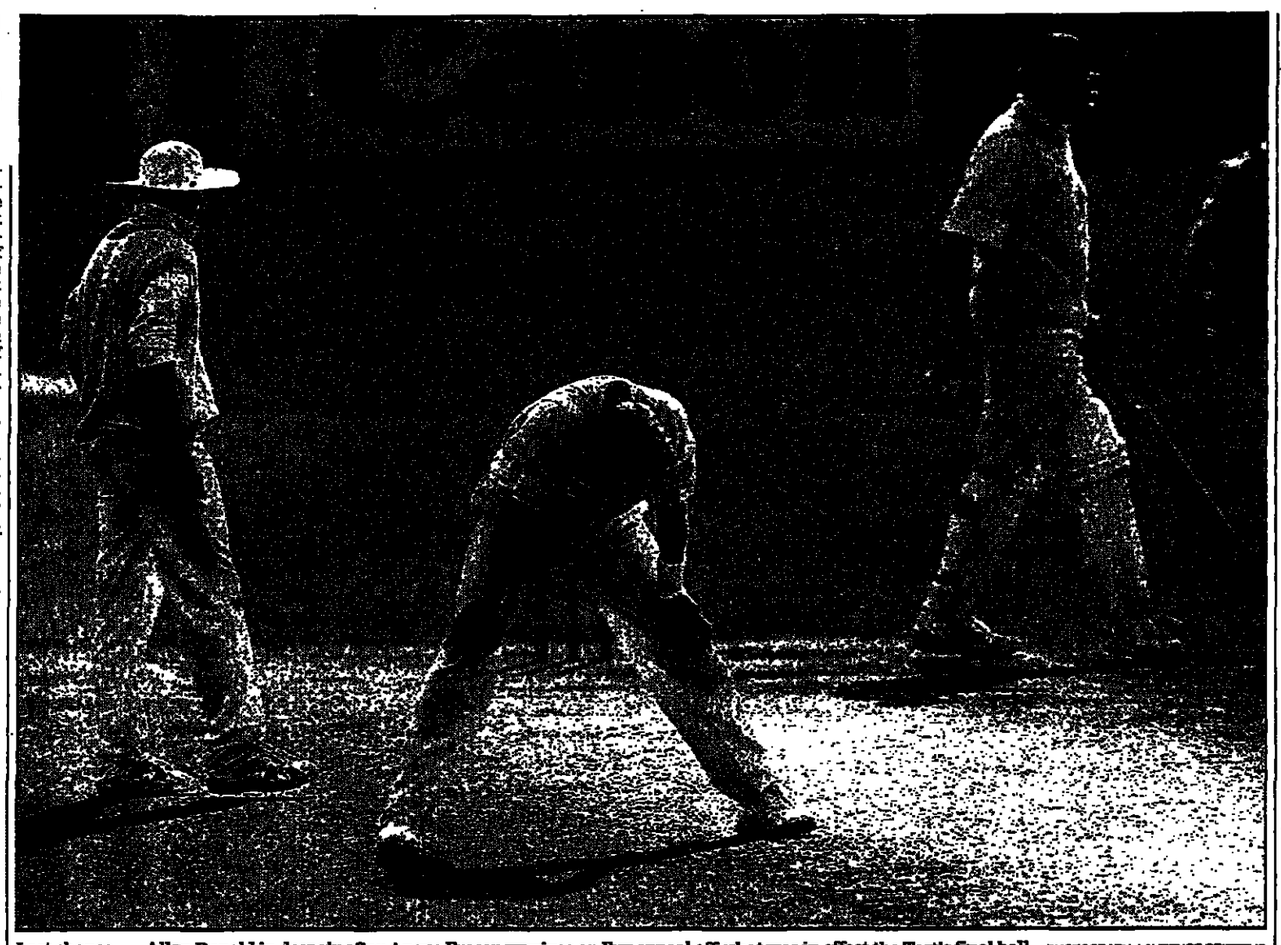
SportsGuardian

South Africa thwarted by last pair's defiance

England v South Africa: third Cornhill Test, final day

England pass endurance test

Mike Selvey at Old Trafford sees the home side last out in a classic nail-biter



Last chance ... Allan Donald in despair after Angus Fraser survives an lbw appeal off what was in effect the Test's final ball PHOTOGRAPH: LAURENCE GRIFFITHS

FROM the most unpromising of beginnings, a memorable Test was played out at Old Trafford yesterday — perhaps even one of the greatest. This was the Great Escape II. Asked to bat out all but 35 minutes of the last two days to save the match, England drew with South Africa by the skin of their teeth with a rearguard action to rival that in Johannesburg three years ago.

In the end, for all the resilience and dedication shown by those who had preceded him, England depended on the ability of Angus Fraser, a No. 11 of no pretensions, to play six deliveries from Allan Donald, indisputably one of history's finest fast bowlers.

England had reached 369 for nine, wiping out the deficit so that at least South Africa would have to bat again and score one run to win should the last wicket fall. In theory there were four overs of the day remaining but in fact Donald had just six balls to set up the victory, as any portion of an over counts as a whole one and two overs would go for the changeover of innings.

So it was that Donald, having sweated blood for 39 overs to take six of the wickets, had to conjure one last scalp.

This was high drama, played out in bright sunlight in front of a small but enthralled crowd, and Fraser was equal to the task.

He allowed the first ball to hit him in the small of the back, blocked the second with aplomb and then almost played a yorker on to his stumps. Fraser bit his lip and prowled, Donald stalked back to his mark.

The next delivery ballooned from pad to short leg. The one after that, fast and short, was played down firmly to his feet.

One ball to go now. Donald turned at the end of his run, and wiped his hands before sliding in one final time. The yorker, fast and with inswing, homed in to Fraser's leg, striking him on the pad. The impassioned appeal for lbw was rejected by the New Zealander Doug Cowie.

And that, according to the Laws, should have been the end and match drawn, but in the confusion one more over was bowled — though even if Fraser's partner Robert Croft was out to the first ball, it would have counted as a full over and left no allotment for South Africa to change over.

Fittingly it was Croft who played the final delivery before offering a clenched-fist salute, shaking hands and walking off. For 190 of the most tense minutes of his life the Welshman had defied the bowlers, and if he had begun his innings like a numbskull he recovered to bat heroically. His was the stroke off Makhaya Ntini that went past cover point for the two runs that brought the scores level.

Croft had arrived at the crease 50 minutes after lunch, three wickets having gone down for three runs in as many overs and the basis laid for an England Special-style collapse. Briefly, against Paul Adams's left-arm weirdoes, he batted like a man possessed, seemingly oblivious to the situation while his partner Mark Ramprakash was digging in. Ramprakash's words between overs were like slapping an hysteric round the chops and thereafter he put not a foot wrong.

The pair were still together at tea, only for Ramprakash to fall leg-before for a three-hour 34 to Donald's second delivery after the interval. Donald had Ashley Giles immediately but Darren Gough now stayed with Croft for 20 overs, helping him add 38 priceless runs for the ninth wicket before Donald, armed with the third new ball, moved his line of attack from over to around the wicket, banged in his bouncer and forced Gough to glove a looping catch to short leg. Enter Fraser ...

The foundations of the recovery, which means South Africa are still only 1-0 up, came in the first session when England lost the single wicket of Mike Atherton, and that after almost an hour. He and Alec Stewart had taken their third-wicket stand to 226 before Atherton, on 89, hooked Jacques Kallis from outside off stump and was well caught by Ntini at long leg.

Stewart and Ramprakash then added 56, the England captain moving on to 164, made in eight hours with 24 fours, before he too lost concentration, hooked unwisely, this time at Donald, and was caught by the squarer of two men posted for precisely that.

England at that stage were 76 behind with what proved to be 55 overs remaining. Even Stewart must have thought it was all over bar the shouting.

But South Africa were hindered by a pitch that seemed to improve as the match progressed and an injury to Lance Klusener that prevented him bowling yesterday. Donald, dodgy left ankle and all, and Kallis, the Man of the Match, sent down 81 overs.

Three years ago at the Wanderers, Hansie Cronje let Brian McMillan complete a century before declaring, giving Atherton leeway before his marathon. Perhaps his late-innings caution in South Africa's huge 552 for five cost him victory here.

David Hopps, page 17

Final scoreboard

SOUTH AFRICA
First Innings

G Kirsten c Stewart b Fraser	210
G F J Liebenberg b Gough	16
J H Kallis b Gough	132
D J Cullinan b Giles	78
*W J Cronje not out	69
J N Rhodes c Croft b Gough	12
L Klusener not out	17
Extras (b4, lb10, w1, nb6)	21
Total (for 5 dec, 190.5 overs)	552

Fall of wickets 25, 283, 439, 457, 490.

Did not bat: M Ntini, †M V Boucher, A A Donald, P R Adams.

Bowlings: Gough 37–5–116–3; Cork 35.5–7–109–0; Fraser 35–11–87–1; Croft 51–14–103–0; Giles 36–7–108–1; Ramprakash 5–0–17–0.

ENGLAND
First Innings

N V Knight c Boucher b Donald	11
M A Atherton c Boucher b Ntini	41
N Hussain c Boucher b Donald	4
*†A J Stewart b Kallis	45
M R Ramprakash c Boucher b Adams	30
D G Cork c Cronje b Adams	5
R D B Croft b Ntini	11
G P Thorpe lbw b Adams	0
A F Giles not out	16
D Gough c Donald b Adams	6
A R C Fraser lbw b Kallis	0
Extras (b5, lb12, nb1)	18
Total (82.1 overs)	183

Fall of wickets 26, 34, 94, 108, 136, 153, 158, 161, 179.

Bowlings: Donald 13–3–28–2; Klusener 14–4–37–0; Ntini 18–7–28–2; Adams 31–10–63–4; Kallis 6.1–3–10–2.

ENGLAND
Second Innings

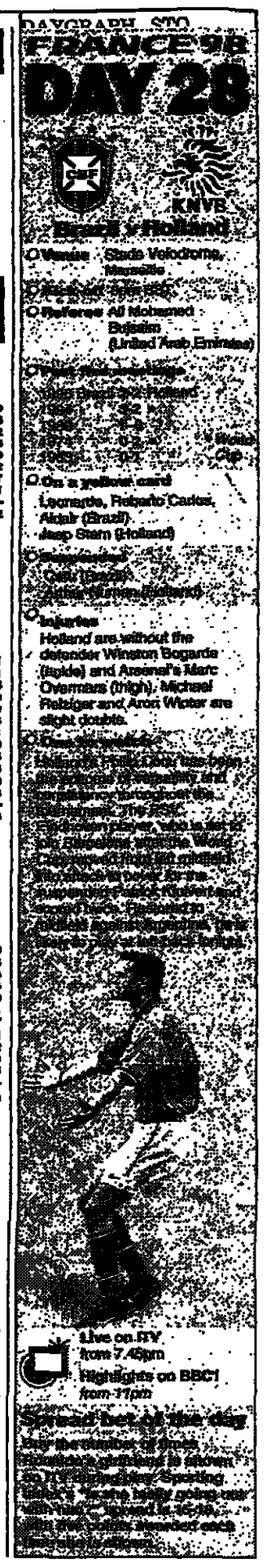
N V Knight c Boucher b Donald	1
M A Atherton c Ntini b Kallis	89
N Hussain b Kallis	6
*†A J Stewart c Klusener b Donald	164
M R Ramprakash lbw b Donald	34
G P Thorpe b Donald	0
D G Cork b Adams	1
R D B Croft not out	37
A F Giles c sub b Donald	1
D Gough c Kirsten b Donald	12
A R C Fraser not out	0
Extras (b20, lb2, w1, nb2)	25
Total (for 9, 171 overs)	369

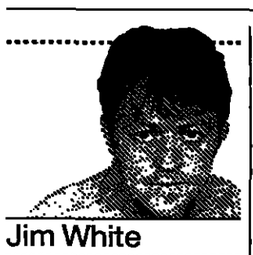
Fall of wickets 4, 11, 237, 293, 293, 296, 328, 329, 367.

Bowlings: Donald 40–14–68–6; Kallis 41–19–71–2; Ntini 29–11–67–0; Adams 51–22–90–1; Klusener 8–0–15–0; Cronje 9–3–15–0; Cullinan 1–0–1–0.

Umpires: P Willey and D Cowie.

Match drawn.





Jim White

Heroes and losers ready to go down with the ship

IT HAS been the season of heroic battles against the odds, of shoulders shoved resolutely against the wheel of defeat. Yes, we are once again deep in the midst of a Dunkirk summer.

First off was Tony Adams, eulogised over the weekend as the Lion of St Etienne, a footballer of unfathomable inner resource. Then there was Matt Dawson, captain courageous, almost drowning in mud on a foreign field yet leading the England rugby team with true grit. And finally there was Alec Stewart, putting together a skipper's knock, to exemplify all that is upright and solid about the English cricketer. As opposed to most of his colleagues who display all the vertebral consistency of jellyfish.

The fact that not one of this threesome was able to put his substantial will to winning effect has hardly lessened the scale of their renown. Indeed, their magnificence seems to have been enhanced by failure.

This is not to belittle them. Adams deserves every plaudit he has received for the single-mindedness with which he overcame limitations in technique through force of will; Dawson, chivvying and scrapping, could not be faulted in South Africa and, in alliance with the weather, was the main reason the Springboks did not compile a cricket score against the least equipped rugby team ever to embark from Britain; and Stewart played beautifully in the second innings of the third Test to confirm his position as the world's leading all-rounder.

No, the problem here is the regularity with which we as a nation have come to celebrate heroic failure. David Batty, not generally known for his perspicacity, had something sage to contribute to the subject on his return from France 98.

"I don't think it will be too bad," he said of his future life as the man who missed in the penalty shoot-out. "The British seem to like losers." And then he smiled, perhaps comforted by the warming embrace of a king-size contract to promote pizzas.

As with his spot-kick technique, though, Batty did not get it quite right. It is not a love of losing which runs deep in our psyche, but this: the way we seem best able to face up to defeat is to post-rationalise it as heroic.

Compare, for instance, our reaction to England's demise in France 98 with the Italian media's response to their team going out from the third World Cup running on penalties. No consolation was gained in Italy from any heroism displayed by the Azzurri, or that Paolo Maldini played his socks off. Rather, analysis focused on failure of technique, failure of nerve and failure of luck.

THE big question is this: does our obsession with heroic failure somehow percolate through to affect our sporting representatives? Do they now play expecting to go down gloriously rather than to win? Psychologists spend a great deal of chargeable time telling us that, since sport is largely played in the mind, an expectation of defeat can engender a sense of inferiority.

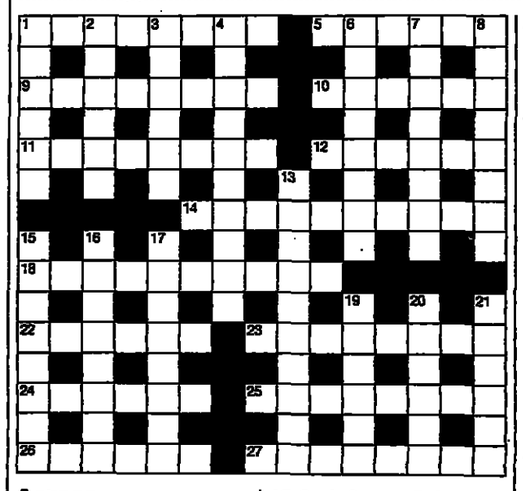
Yet look how many of our sporting encounters are routinely sold as battles against unfair advantage. Rugby matches with New Zealand are generally characterised as a rerun of Rorke's Drift, in which a few brave English lionhearts attempt simply to delay defeat against overwhelming odds.

Similarly the England football team, when engaging in matches with the world's leading nations, seem gripped by the certainty of heroic failure. Those three big reverses on penalties have come after matches in which, despite outplaying opponents assumed to be superior, they appeared to have suffered from a mental block about killing them off. It is perhaps significant that England's only major win on penalties was against Spain in Euro 96, a country whose players are even more shot through with the expectation of disappointment than our own.

As this summer's choice of heroes suggests, going down with the ship may be a concept too ingrained in our collective psychology to be quickly erased, even by the thought of what Michael Owen might achieve next time around. In the meantime, it might help our self-esteem if Messrs Adams, Dawson and Stewart could rely on one or two teammates to share their indomitable spirit in the face of what increasingly looks like the inevitable.

Guardian Crossword No 21,320

Set by Fawley



Across

1,5 Cherish Christmas, perhaps? That's novel! (8,5)
9 Newly geared up to exploit some smashing opportunities? (8)
10 Take out socket set, and remove a blockage (6)
11 Almost fit, having rejected hard liquor (8)
12 One in Gwent suffering a slight pang (6)
14,18 Those working in this group practice may make specific demands (10,10)
22 To cope with a constant complaint, see me outside (6)
23 Dithering a moment, I may identify a fossil (8)
24 Wind appears to rise rapidly (5)
25 I may chase little English party animal! (8)
26,27 Questioning what reaction Sellers could provoke? (6,8)

Down

1 Cast could be disconcerted ... (6)
2 ... see when one should enter, with no problem (6)
3,17 Curses responsible for a certain offence? (6,8)
4 Touch bottom, finally indulging in repeated deceit (3,7)
6,19 Port taken with part of meal in someone's study? (8,6)
7 It'll have to turn up under ocean at last to appear in maps! (8)
8 Bank on the French to show up verse that's poor (8)
13 Can gamble, when cooking, bring in new type of dessert? (10)
15 In some cases, stomach a gang turning up with a bit of money (8)
16 Almost leaves over row in Border region (8)
17 See 3
19 See 6
20 Element found in 4,17 and 22, showing character of 'lac,5? (6)
21 Lack the initiative to detoxify soil? (6)

UNCLOTHE UNUSED
TRIED EAR
AMERICANS MANNA
HOODIE ADL
SUBSTANTIATE
FCS HRO LR
ALAS CRACKDOWNS
LTA IHE OH
EASTKNOWN GOBI
OLT KAY DP
WHOLEHEARTED
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